

**CYNGOR CEFN GWLAD CYMRU
COUNTRYSIDE COUNCIL FOR WALES**

SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST CITATION

SWANSEA

BISHOP'S WOOD

Date of Notification: 2003

National Grid Reference: SS592880

O.S. Maps: 1:50,000 Sheet number: 159
1:10,000 Sheet number: SS58 NE

Site Area: 9.9 ha

Description:

Bishop's Wood is of special interest for its semi-natural broadleaved woodland.

The site is situated approximately 10 km to the west of Swansea covering both sides of a steep sided limestone valley, running in a south-easterly direction into Caswell Bay. The underlying limestone is overlain by shallow loamy, brown rankers soil and the altitude ranges from 10-70m.

Most of the woodland is co-dominated by tall mature maiden ash *Fraxinus excelsior* and oak *Quercus spp*, with a dense shrub layer of hazel *Corylus avellana*, hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, field maple *Acer campestre*, holly *Ilex aquifolium* with regeneration of ash and some sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*. Also present but at a lower cover are spindle *Euonymus europaeus*, blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*, elder *Sambucus nigra*, young beech *Fagus sylvatica* and a localised presence of lime *Tilia europaea*. There is a dense, species rich field layer comprising species such as wood anemone *Anemone nemorosa*, ivy *Hedera helix* hart's- tongue fern *Phyllitis scolopendrium*, bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scripta* and broad-buckler fern *Dryopteris dilatata*. The field layer also contains many other species including dog's mercury *Mercurialis perennis*, herb Robert *Geranium robertianum* and ramsons *Allium ursinum*. The ground layer is generally sparse comprising mainly the mosses *Thamnobryum alopecurum*, *Brachythecium rutabulum* and *Eurhynchium praelongum*, with the former in particular being indicative of calcareous soils.

The field layer also contains a number of other species, including dog's mercury *Mercurialis perennis*, herb Robert *Geranium robertianum* and ransoms *Allium ursinum*. The soil layer is generally thin, mainly including the mosses *Thamnobryum alopecurum*, *Brachythecium rutabulum* and *Eurhynchium praelongum*, the former in particular is an indicator of calcareous soil.

The upper slopes of the eastern side of the valley are dominated by a mature, relatively dense canopy of oak. The shrub layer comprises mainly holly and hazel with scattered hawthorn, sycamore and beech. Here the field layer consists predominantly of bramble *Rubus fruticosus* and bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* with locally frequent cow-wheat *Melampyrum pratense* and honeysuckle *Lonicera periclymenum*.

Remarks:

Together with four other sites in the area Bishop's Wood is part of Gower Ash Woods cSAC which supports woodland vegetation assignable to the habitat type '*Tilio-Acerion* forest of slope, screes and ravines' listed on Annex 1 of the EC Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43 EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Flora and Fauna).