

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

SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST CITATION

**CARMARTHENSHIRE**

**MYNYDD YSTYFFLAU-CARN**

**Date of Notification:** 1990

**National Grid Reference:** SN 469266

**O.S. Maps:** 1: 50,000 Sheet number: 146  
1: 25,000 Sheet number: SN 42

**Site Area:** 53.4 ha

**Description:**

An extensive area of wet heathy grassland occupying a plateau-like depression at an altitude of almost 300 metres (985 feet) on the watershed ridge between the rivers Gwili and Tywi. Its semi-natural vegetation contrasts sharply with that of the surrounding agricultural and afforested land, and is one of the largest areas of its kind in Carmarthen.

Purple moor-grass *Molinia caerulea* predominates, with abundant bushy heather *Calluna vulgaris*. Typical wet heath species are scattered throughout, including crossleaved heath *Erica tetralix*, deergrass *Trichophorum cespitosum*, heath rush *Juncus squarrosus*, hare's-tail cottongrass *Eriophorum vaginatum* and two species of bog-moss, *Sphagnum capillifolium* and *S. cuspidatum*. Drier areas have tormentil *Potentilla erecta* and bilberry *Vaccinium myrtillus*.

Damp hollows support cranberry *Vaccinium oxycoccos* and crowberry *Empetrum nigrum*, the latter species being at, or near, the most south-westerly point of its British range. Some pools have a dense growth of common cottongrass *Eriophorum angustifolium*, whilst common sedge *Carex nigra* and the bog-moss *Sphagnum recurvum*, also occur. Across the centre of the heath is an elongate flush with bog asphodel *Narthecium ossifragum*, hare's-tail cottongrass and the two bog-mosses, *Sphagnum papillosum* and *S. tenellum*. Nearby, low man-made mounds of archaeological interest are covered with a light scrub of downy birch *Betula pubescens*, grey willow *Salix cinerea* and western gorse *Ulex gallii*.

Whinchat nest in the limited areas of scrub and curlew breed on the open heath itself which, in winter, is hunted over by visiting hen harriers and merlins.

**Remarks:**

The site is registered as common land.

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