

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

SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST CITATION

POWYS

RHOS YR HAFOD

<u>Date of Notification:</u>	1985
<u>National Grid Reference:</u>	SN 909678
<u>O.S. Maps:</u>	1:50, 000 Sheet number: 147 1:25, 000 Sheet number: SN 96
<u>Site Area:</u>	14.4 ha

Description:

This site is chiefly of importance as an outstanding example of upland herb-rich pastureland in which a number of uncommon plant species are very well represented. It consists of seven fields with no stock-proof boundaries between most of them, a small area of adjacent upland and some areas of woodland, scrub and bracken *Pteridium aquilinum*, the latter supporting a good number of passerine bird species, including tree creeper, tree pipit and willow tit. This diverse habitat is of particular value in supporting prey species of raptors which hunt the area and adjacent upland. The site occupies fairly steep slopes, with a southerly to easterly aspect.

The grassland consists of bents and fescues *Agrostis-Festuca*, sweet vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum* and crested dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus*, with a few small damp flushes dominated by sharp-flowered rush *Juncus acutiflorus* and purple moor-grass *Molinia caerulea*. The dry grassland is typically species-rich, with abundant tormentil *Potentilla erecta*, eyebright *Euphrasia* agg, yellow-rattle *Rhinanthus minor*, great burnet *Sanguisorba officinalis* and cat's-ear *Hypochoeris radicata* and also a very good representation of devil's-bit scabious *Succisa pratensis* and the nationally rare wood bitter-vetch *Vicia orobus*. Mountain pansy *Viola lutea*, burnet-saxifrage *Pimpinella saxifraga* and goldenrod *Solidago virgaurea* are occasional, the latter species interestingly scattered all over some fields, possibly indicative of a very low level of grazing. Sizeable areas have been invaded by bracken.

The damper areas of managed grassland and a small area of adjacent upland are species-rich, with abundant tormentil and frequent devil's-bit scabious, saw-wort *Serratula tinctoria*, lousewort *Pedicularis sylvatica*, dyer's greenweed *Genista tinctoria*, petty whin *G. anglica*, western gorse *Ulex gallii*, carnation sedge *Carex panicea* and wavy hair-grass *Deschampsia flexuosa*, also some bog asphodel *Narthecium ossifragum*.

Drier banks and rock outcrops occur in places, and support good amounts of betony *Stachys officinalis*, sheep's-bit *Jasione montana* and early hair-grass *Aira praecox*.

The presence of a significant amount of Yorkshire-fog *Holcus lanatus* and clover *Trifolium* spp. on a small proportion of the site is indicative of reversion from past agricultural improvement, but the area is still relatively herb-rich. In addition to abundant yellow-rattle, great burnet and wood bitter-vetch are still well represented.

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