

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

SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST CITATION

MONMOUTH

CWM LLANWENARTH MEADOWS

Date of Notification: 1987

National Grid Reference: SO 254124

O.S. maps 1:50,000 Sheet number: 161
1:25,000 Sheet number: SO 21

Site area: 3.02 ha

Description:

The site is comprised of two unimproved meadows on the flanking slopes of a small mountain stream and associated wetland areas. Soils are slowly permeable fine loamy clays of the Wilcocks Series with a well developed peaty surface horizon giving way to waterlogged peat in lower lying areas. The underlying geology is comprised of superficial deposits of glacial sand and gravel over Old Red Sandstone.

A diverse range of plant communities is represented at this site with mesotrophic grassland on the upper slopes characterised by meadow fescue *Festuca pratensis*, rough stalked meadow grass *Poa trivialis*, yorkshire fog *Rolcus lanatus* and lesser knapweed *Centaurea nigra*, this gives way to a matrix of species rich acid grassland and fen meadow communities in the valley bottom. The former is dominated by two species of bent *Agrostis canina* and *A. capillaris* and sheeps fescue *Festuca ovina* with many species of sedge; herbs include purging flax *Linum catharticum*, lousewort *Pedicularis sylvatica* and devils bit scabious *Succisa pratensis*. The fen meadow communities are variously dominated by purple moor grass *Molinia caerulea*, rush *Juncus articulatus* and meadow sweet *Filipendula ulmaria*.

Communities can be referred to the *Lathyrus pratensis* sub-community of the *Centaurea nigra* - *Cynosurus cristatus* meadow, *Festuca rubra* - *Agrostis stolonifera* - *Potentilla anserina* inundation grassland and several variants of the Fen Meadow community

The site is also important for large stands of several locally rare species, including greater burnet *Sanguisorba officinalis*, bog bean *Menyanthes trifoliata* and marsh helleborine *Epipactis palustris*.

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