

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

SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST CITATION

POWYS

**MOITY AND GARTH DINGLES
AND FRON WOOD**

<u>Date of Notification:</u>	1988
<u>National Grid Reference:</u>	SO 184428 and SO 190421
<u>O.S. Maps:</u>	1:50, 000 Sheet number: 148 1:25, 000 Sheet number: SO 14
<u>Site Area:</u>	23.5 ha

Description:

This site is one of the largest and most species-rich examples of the more base-rich semi-natural ancient woodland vegetation types that occur in Radnor. Locally uncommon plant species are found here. The vegetation present provides excellent examples of sub-communities of three nationally recognised vegetation groupings: (i) ash/field maple/dog's mercury *Fraxinus excelsior/Acer campestre/Mercurialis perennis*, (ii) ash/rowan/dog's mercury *F. excelsior/Sorbus aucuparia/M. perennis* and (iii) oak/bracken/bramble *Quercus robur/Pteridium aquilinum/Rubus fruticosus*, such characteristic vegetation types being distinguished by the differential occurrence of typical species and ranges in plant species diversity.

The site comprises three distinct, but virtually contiguous woods centred on a stream running through Moity and Garth Dingles. Fron Wood is on a south-facing hill slope adjoining Garth Dingle. The woods are surrounded by improved grassland or arable land and much of the woodland edge is fenced. Parts of Fron Wood and more localised areas of both the dingle woodlands are utilised by grazing stock.

Although variable in structure and species composition the individual woods are essentially complementary to each other in their representation of the three woodland types. Moity Dingle is dominated by ash of even age, whereas Garth Dingle and Fron Wood are predominantly of hybrid oak occurring as mature trees with maiden stems. Ash is however a frequent component of the entire site and wych elm is well represented in both dingles. Other canopy species include locally frequent silver birch *Betula pendula*, local invasive sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus* and occasional wild cherry *Prunus avium*. Rowan *Sorbus aucuparia* is sparsely represented in Moity Dingle. Although most of the elm is dead some sucker regrowth occurs. This contributes to the existing structural diversity in which the canopy is sometimes open, allowing the development of bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* glades or an extensive field layer of

bramble *Rubus fruticosus* or of nettle *Urtica dioica*. The shrub layer, though variable, is generally well developed and locally it includes field maple *Acer campestre*.

Uncommon plants occurring in the site include early-purple orchid *Orchis mascula*, which is well represented, together with twayblade *Listera ovata* in a small part of the site where planted beech *Fagus sylvatica* is locally dominant. Other notable species which are rare in Radnor and which occur in different parts of the site include spindle *Euonymus europaeus*, mistletoe *Viscum album* and meadow saxifrage *Saxifraga granulata*.

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