CYNGOR CEFN GWLAD CYMRU COUNTRYSIDE COUNCIL FOR WALES

SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST CITATION

RHONDDA CYNON TAFF

MYNYDD TY-ISAF

Date of Notification:	1972, 1986
National Grid Reference:	SS929968
O.S. Maps	1:50,000 Sheet number: 170

Site Area:

Description:

The cliffs and crags of the glacial corries at the head of the Rhondda Fawr Valley reach a height of 558 metres and dominate the landscape within the boundary of the Mynydd Ty Isaf Site of Special Scientific Interest. The three cliff systems formed during the erosion of the corries include Tarren Saerbren, Graig Fawr and Graig Fach. The Pennant Sandstone strata exposed in the corrie cliff systems, and also underlying the rest of the Mid Glamorgan uplands, supports a range of vegetation types including *Calluna* dominated heath, *Vaccinium myrtillus* heath, a range of species poor grasslands, bracken-dominated slopes and fern-rich screes and rock outcrops. Recently planted coniferous trees occupy much of Cwm Saerbren and some cliff top land.

322 ha

1:25,000 Sheet number: SS 99

The Pennant Sandstone crags are of particular interest as they support a number of arcticalpine and other plant species of local distribution in Wales. The parsley fern *Cryptogramma crispa* occurs here at what is thought to be one of its most southerly British stations. Other ferns growing on crags within the SSSI include beech fern *Phegopteris connectilis*, mountain fern *Oreopteris limbosperma*, broad buckler fern *Dryopteris dilatata*, lady fern *Athyriurn filix-femina* and brittle bladder fern *Cystopteris fragilis*.

In addition to supporting an interesting pteridophyte flora, the higher crags within the SSSI provide nesting sites for a Schedule 1 raptor.

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