

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

SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST CITATION

POWYS

MOCHDRE DINGLES

<u>Date of notification:</u>	1985
<u>National grid reference:</u>	SO 080878, SO 065875
<u>O.S. Maps:</u>	1:50,000 Sheet number: 136 1:25,000 Sheet number: SJ 08
<u>Site area:</u>	49.9 ha

Description:

This site is an outstanding example of mixed deciduous woodland in Montgomery. Vegetation types range from typical sessile oakwood to a more base-rich type in which oak and ash are dominant and in which a variety of other tree species occurs, including wych elm and field maple. Hazel often forms a well developed shrub-layer in this latter type. A greater diversity of flowering plant species has been recorded in this site than in any other woodland in Montgomery. The site is also of high ornithological interest.

The woodlands are developed in dingles on the Hafod and Cwm-y-rhiwdre Brooks and tributaries. These streams are incised into Silurian shales of the Wenlock and Ludlow strata. The ground rock is locally relatively base-rich and Hafod Dingle and the western banks of Cwm-y-rhiwdre Brook thus support a well developed and diverse ground flora. Grazing intensity varies from heavy to absent in different parts of the site.

Hafod Dingle is predominantly mature oak-ash woodland with a varied, but locally very well developed understorey of hazel. The ground-layer is dominated by creeping soft-grass *Holcus mollis* and tufted hair-grass *Deschampsia cespitosa*, with bluebell *Endymion non-scriptus* locally abundant. Other species include false brome *Brachypodium sylvaticum* and wood sanicle *Sanicula europaea*. The western slopes of the Cwm-y-rhiwdre Brook are very varied in canopy structure and species composition, but a similar range of vegetation types occurs. The richer areas may also include ransoms *Allium ursinum*, dog's mercury *Mercurialis perennis* and hedge woundwort *Stachys sylvatica*. Early-purple orchid *Orchis mascula* is present and herb-Paris *Paris quadrifolia*, a rare plant in Montgomery, occurs in the Cwm-du part of the site. The eastern side of the brook tends to be more typical of the acidic sessile oak wood type, with a limited ground flora in which typically common cow-wheat *Melampyrum pratense* is a constituent. However, base-rich areas do occur and locally the woods demonstrate intermediate characteristics. A variable quantity of birch may be present in such areas.

The variety in canopy and shrub species, together with variations in tree density and understorey development, contributes to habitat diversity which renders the woods attractive to many species of woodland birds.

*This document is **NOT** a definitive legal version and has been formatted, updated and partially edited for use on the CCW Web site. This document should not be used in any legal proceedings, public enquiry or any other hearing or appeal. If you require a full legal copy of the document please contact CCW in writing.*