

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

SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST CITATION

POWYS

COED COPI'R GRAIG

Date of Notification: 1993

National Grid Reference: SJ 035152

O.S. Maps: 1:50,000 Sheet number: 125
1:25,000 Sheet number: SJ 01

Site Area: 6.9 ha

Description:

The wooded cliffs and banks of the River Vyrnwy, together with the rock outcrops in the river channel, here support the only example known in Montgomeryshire of a northern woodland type close to the southernmost edge of its range in Britain. A rich moss and lichen flora growing on the trees is also present, together with a range of locally scarce northern plant species.

Coed Copi'r Graig, situated about two miles south of Llanwddyn, is a narrow block of woodland lining the northern bank of the Vyrnwy, here flowing in a south-easterly direction at an altitude of 170 metres. Acidic to basic shale of Silurian age underlies the site and outcrops through the wood and along the river bank and channel. Soil types range from skeletal soils developing on screes and rock outcrops, through rankers to stagnogleys on the narrow strip of level ground at the base of the woodland slope.

Developed on the stagnogley soil and damp rock outcrops is a northern woodland type characterised by the presence of marsh hawk's-beard *Crepis paludosa* with such typically northern species as globeflower *Trollius europaeus*, mountain melick *Melica nutans*, wood crane's-bill *Geranium sylvaticum* and stone bramble *Rubus saxatilis* under a canopy of ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, rowan *Sorbus aucuparia* and sessile oak *Quercus petraea*.

Developed on the trees in this sheltered site is the finest known example in Montgomeryshire of the lobarion lichen-dominated community. This was probably once a widespread epiphytic community in ancient woodlands in Britain, but is now confined, due to atmospheric pollution, to a few sheltered sites. Here *Lobaria pulmonaria* occurs with species such as *Dimerella lutea*, *Thelopsis rubella*, *Phyllopora rosei* and *Microglaena muscorum*. The moss, *Neckera crispa*, normally confined to basic rock, unusually occurs here as an epiphyte (a plant growing on another plant). The rock outcrops support a wide range of species, some of which, such as lesser meadow-rue *Thalictrum minus* and burnet rose *Rosa pimpinellifolia* are of rare occurrence in Montgomeryshire. Lower plants growing on the rock surfaces (epilithic plants) include large

colonies of the lichens *Sticta Sylvatica* and *Nephroma laevigata*, and lime-loving mosses such as *Ctenidium molluscum* and *Neckera* species.

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