

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

SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST CITATION

MONMOUTHSHIRE

SUGAR LOAF WOODLANDS

Date of Notification: 1971, 1985

National Grid Reference: SO 284195, SO 277168, SO 295165

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

Site Area: 173.3 ha

Description:

Three extensive areas of ancient coppice woodland (St Mary's Vale, Twyn-yr-Allt and The Park) on the south and east slopes of the Sugar Loaf Mountain on Brownstones of the Old Red Sandstone Series. Most of the woodland is dominated by sessile oak *Quercus petraea* which gives way to pedunculate oak *Q robur* and hybrids on the lower slopes. Local areas of alder *Alnus glutinosa* and beech *Fagus sylvatica* occur alongside streams. There is a characteristic acidophilous ground flora with large areas dominated by bilberry *Vaccinium myrtillus* and wavy hairgrass *Deschampsia flexuosa* which changes to more luxuriant herb, fern and bryophyte communities on the flushed lower slopes and streamsides. Epiphytic lichens are abundant, particularly on the trees of the upper slopes.

Remarks:

Within Brecon Beacons National Park.

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