

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

SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST CITATION

CARMARTHENSHIRE

YNYS UCHAF

Date of Notification: 1987

National Grid Reference: SN 489149

O.S. Maps: 1: 50, 000 Sheet number: 159
1: 25, 000 Sheet number: SN 41

Site Area: 15.7 ha

Description:

A large area of flood plain mire located on the relatively base-enriched Old Red Sandstone soils of the Gwendraeth Bach valley, large expanses of the site being covered by a fenland-type plant community dominated by meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*, marsh valerian *Valeriana officinalis*, marsh-marigold *Caltha palustris*, water horsetail *Equisetum fluviatile* and hemlock water-dropwort *Oenanthe croccata*. Ynys Uchaf is the only known locality in the Borough for tubular water-dropwort *Oenanthe fistulosa*. Small areas are more acidic with bladder-sedge *Carex vesicaria* and bogbean *Menyanthes trifoliata*. The southern edge of this site is fringed by a carr of alder *Alnus glutinosa*, ash *Fraxinus excelsior* and several species of willow *Salix* spp', below these trees greater tussock-sedge *Carex paniculata* forms imposing stands.

Water rail *Rallus aquaticus* is believed to breed and wildfowl, principally teal *Anas crecca* and mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*, frequent the site, especially during winter. The adjacent Gwendraeth Bach is rich in aquatic invertebrates and is regularly used by otters *Lutra lutra* who take advantage of the cover provided by the vegetation for resting.

Several notable invertebrates occur at Ynys Uchaf, including the brilliantly iridescent chrysomelid beetle *Pilemostoma fastuosa*, and also *Phyllobrotica quadrimaculata*, a beetle whose larvae feed on skullcap *Scutellaria galericulata*. The slender groundhopper *Tetrix subulata*, a small invertebrate related to the grasshoppers and which is very local in Wales, occurs on mossy areas.

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