

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

SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST CITATION

POWYS

COED MAWR - BLAEN-CAR

<u>Date of Notification:</u>	1990
<u>National Grid Reference:</u>	SN 930285 & SN 937285
<u>O.S. Maps:</u>	1:50,000 Sheet number: 160 1:25,000 Sheet number: SN92
<u>Site Area:</u>	13.2

Description:

The site comprises a fine example of damp semi-natural woodland with adjacent areas of unimproved hay meadow and wet pasture, lying alongside Nant Car, south-east of Sennybridge.

Coed Mawr contains two distinct types of woodland. The wetter ground supports a canopy of alder *Alnus glutinosa* with much grey willow *Salix cinerea* and hazel *Corylus avellana*. The ground flora is characterised by an abundance of opposite-leaved golden-saxifrage *Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*, meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*, creeping soft-grass *Holcus mollis* and creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, with marsh-marigold *Caltha palustris* and yellow iris *Iris pseudacorus* being locally prominent. The drier ground supports a canopy of sessile oak *Quercus petraea*, including many large mature to over-mature specimens supporting a rich lichen flora. The understorey here consists of hazel coppice and holly *Ilex aquifolium*. The ground flora is fairly grassy, but herbs such as bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*, wood-sorrel *Oxalis acetosella* and greater stitchwort *Stellaria holostea* are abundant throughout. Wood anemone *Anemone nemorosa* and pignut *Conopodium majus* are locally frequent. A clearing within the wood is largely dominated by purple moor-grass *Molinia caerulea*, but also contains banks of drier grassland dominated by common bent *Agrostis capillaris* and fescues *Festuca spp.*, with a variety of herbs, including common knapweed *Centaurea nigra*, bitter-vetch *Lathyrus montanus*, great burnet *Sanguisorba officinalis*, saw-wort *Serratula tinctoria*, betony *Stachys officinalis* and devil's-bit scabious *Succisa pratensis*.

An area of hay meadow lies immediately to the east of the wood. This mostly well-drained area is dominated by a mixture of grasses which includes common bent, fescues and sweet vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum*. Frequent associates are common knapweed, common bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*, tormentil *Potentilla erecta*, great burnet and devil's-bit scabious. An old hedge-line runs across the centre of the area. This is bordered by a strip of damp grassland dominated by sharp-flowered rush *Juncus acutiflorus*, with abundant purple moor-grass, meadowsweet and tufted hair-grass *Deschampsia cespitosa*, and also frequent sneezewort *Achillea ptarmica* and marsh willowherb *Epilobium palustre*. Meadow thistle

Cirsium dissectum occurs locally in this area. The remainder of the site comprises an area of damp species-rich pasture to the east of Blaen-car farm. The wetter ground supports a community dominated by meadowsweet with frequent Yorkshire-fog *Holcus lanatus*, wild angelica *Angelica sylvestris*, marsh thistle *Cirsium palustre*, wood horsetail *Equisetum sylvaticum*, sharp-flowered rush, creeping buttercup and common valerian *Valeriana officinalis*. Elsewhere purple moor-grass becomes dominant, although the species listed above remain prominent, along with creeping bent *Agrostis stolonifera*, common marsh-bedstraw *Galium palustre*, compact rush *Juncus conglomeratus* and common sorrel *Rumex acetosa*. Other associates include marsh-marigold, greater bird's-foot trefoil *Lotus uliginosus*, ragged-robin *Lychnis flos-cuculi* and marsh valerian *Valerian dioica*. Small areas of drier grassland occur within this field. These support a wide variety of species, including common bent, fescues, sweet vernal-grass, Yorkshire-fog, common knapweed, dyer's greenweed *Genista tinctoria*, creeping willow *Salix repens*, great burnet, saw-wort, betony, devil's-bit scabious and wood bitter-vetch *Vicia orobus*. This large area of herb-rich grassland lying in close proximity to a fine woodland presents a rare juxtaposition of habitats known elsewhere to support notable invertebrate populations. These still await study at this site.

Remarks:

The site lies within the Brecon Beacons National Park.

*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.*