

CYNGOR CEFN GWLAD CYMRU
COUNTRYSIDE COUNCIL FOR WALES

SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST CITATION

CARMARTHENSHIRE

GWEUNYDD A CHOED PEN-TY
(PEN-TY PASTURES & WOOD)

Date of Notification: 1989

National Grid Reference: SN 483167

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

Site Area: 9 ha

Description:

The site consists of two areas of unimproved herb-rich grassland linked by a wet semi-natural wood. This habitat complex is of outstanding botanical and entomological interest, supporting a number of uncommon species.

The sloping pasture south of the wood is on fairly acidic soils and is particularly notable for its huge population of meadow thistle *Cirsium dissectum*, a declining southern species that is characteristic of damp pastures found in parts of the Carmarthen Coalfield and elsewhere. Other uncommon and characteristic species that grow in this pasture are devil's-bit scabious *Succisa pratensis*, whorled caraway *Carum verticillatum*, saw-wort *Serratula tinctoria*, heath spotted-orchid *Dactylorhiza maculata* ssp. *ericetorum* and petty whin *Genista anglica*, together with at least six species of sedge *Carex* spp. The field margins, flushes and damp areas at the foot of the slope support a nationally recognised plant community characterised by purple moor-grass *Molinia caerulea*, tormentil *Potentilla erecta* and wild angelica *Angelica sylvestris*. Other representative species here include meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*, greater bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus uliginosus* and marsh-marigold *Caltha palustris*. The pasture also has some heathy areas with heather *Calluna vulgaris*, Sheep's-fescue *Festuca ovina*, purple moor-grass, heath wood-rush *Luzula multiflora*, and heath spotted-orchid.

The pasture north of the wood supports a contrasting mesotrophic grassland community, with common bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*, common knapweed *Centaurea nigra*, yarrow *Achillea millefolium* amongst Yorkshire-fog *Holcus lanatus*, sweet vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum* and crested dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus*. This enclosure, in conjunction with the adjacent woodland, is noteworthy for its invertebrate fauna, with twenty-four species of butterfly having been recorded, including localized and declining species such as marbled white *Melanargia galathea*, small blue *Cupido minimus*, silver-washed fritillary *Argynnis paphia* and brown hairstreak *Thecla betulae*. The sheltered, irregular woodland edge and hedgerows, with an abundance of young blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*, provide ideal conditions for the brown hairstreak, an uncommon autumn-flying butterfly. The southerly pasture supports the marsh fritillary butterfly *Eurodryas aurinia* and the small pearl-bordered fritillary *Boloria selene*, also the hoverfly, *Arctophila fulva*, which is a characteristic species of this type of grassland.

The wet woodland connecting these areas of pasture is dominated by alder *Alnus glutinosa* and ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, with a ground flora typified by yellow pimpernel *Lysimachia nemorum*, tufted hair-grass *Deschampsia cespitosa* and remote sedge *Carex remota*. Water avens *Geum rivale* occurs locally.

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