

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

SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST CITATION

CARMARTHENSHIRE

CAEAU RHYD-Y-GWIAIL

Date of Notification: 1999

National Grid Reference: SN 563 148

O.S. Maps: 1:50,000 Sheet number: 159
1:10,000 Sheet number: SN 51 SE

Site Area: 7 ha

Description:

Caeau Rhyd-y-gwiall is of special interest for its neutral and wet grassland vegetation. Other habitats present include various stands of wet heath and scrub. The site lies approximately 1.5 km north-east of Gorslas, on the Millstone Grit ridge which delineates the northern edge of the South Wales Coalfield.

The main areas of neutral grassland occur in the north-western section of the site. Here, grasses such as common bent *Agrostis capillaris*, sweet vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum* and red fescue *Festuca rubra* are frequent, with common knapweed *Centaurea nigra*, common bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*, tormentil *Potentilla erecta* and devil's-bit scabious *Succisa pratensis* also adding colour to the sward.

Elsewhere at Caeau Rhyd-y-gwiall, damp grassland vegetation predominates. These stands are typically dominated by purple moor-grass *Molinia caerulea*, with associates such as tormentil, devil's-bit scabious and whorled caraway *Carum verticillatum*. There are also occasional patches of rush-pasture which are characterized by sharp-flowered rush *Juncus acutiflorus* and common marsh-bedstraw *Galium palustre*, alongside ragged robin *Lychnis flos-cuculi*, marsh willowherb *Epilobium palustre* and greater bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus pedunculatus*.

In the south-eastern portion of the site, wet heath becomes frequent. Here the sward is dominated by heather *Calluna vulgaris*, with deergrass *Trichophorum cespitosum*, cross-leaved heath *Erica tetralix* and bilberry *Vaccinium myrtillus* and more locally, western gorse *Ulex gallii*.

Other vegetation at Caeau Rhyd-y-gwiall includes a small area of dry acid grassland in the north-west of the site, with sheep's-fescue *Festuca ovina*, heath bedstraw *Galium saxatile*, tormentil and devil's-bit scabious, and a tiny stand of dry heath comprised of heather, western gorse and bilberry in the south-east. There are also some scattered patches of scrub.

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