

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

SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST: CITATION

VALE OF GLAMORGAN

COEDYDD Y BARRI/BARRY WOODLANDS

Date of Notification: 4 April 2007

National Grid Reference: ST 087690 and ST 127707

OS Maps: 1:50,000 Sheet number: 171
1:10,000 Sheet number: SO 00 SW

Site Area: 120.0 ha

Description:

Coedydd Y Barri/Barry Woodlands is of special interest for its semi-natural broadleaved woodland.

The site comprises a series of fourteen separate woodland blocks, some of which are connected by hedgerows. They are in two groups, about 3 km apart, centred on Pencoedre Wood and Middleton Wood, on the northern and western outskirts of Barry, in the Vale of Glamorgan. Most of the woodlands are on gently sloping ground at an altitude of between 30m and 70m and associated with clayey, often waterlogged, moderately base rich lowland soils that in Wales are almost entirely restricted to the Vale of Glamorgan. Long-established woodland on this particular soil-type gives rise to ash-dominated woodland that supports a rich ground flora. This series of woodlands is the best example of this habitat in Wales.

The individual woodlands vary in the combination of species of tree present, depending on their management in the past. Generally, ash *Fraxinus excelsior* is the dominant species, but pedunculate oak *Quercus robur* and beech *Fagus sylvatica* are also present. Other tree species include hornbeam *Carpinus betulus*, sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus* and downy birch *Betula pubescens*. Some of the woods have been subject to replanting in the past.

Beneath the woodland canopy, a shrub layer consists of species such as hazel *Corylus avellana*, field maple *Acer campestre*, hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, wych elm *Ulmus glabra*, spindle *Euonymus europaeus* and crab apple *Malus sylvestris*. Occasionally, wild privet *Ligustrum vulgare*, wayfaring tree *Viburnum lantana*, wild cherry *Prunus avium* and holly *Ilex aquifolium* can also be found. Climbing species such as field-rose *Rosa arvensis* and honeysuckle *Lonicera periclymenum* use these shrubs and trees for support. Where there is a gap in the woodland canopy, downy birch, field maple, ash and other tree and shrub saplings occur, competing to fill the space created by fallen or dying trees.

The ground flora of these woodlands is of particular interest as it is especially rich, even in areas replanted with non-native trees.

Typically, this includes woodland species such as dog's mercury *Mercurialis perennis*, yellow archangel *Lamiastrum galeobdolon*, enchanter's-nightshade *Circaea lutetiana*, lesser celandine

Ranunculus ficaria, soft shield-fern *Polystichum setiferum*, bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*, primrose *Primula vulgaris*, wood anemone *Anemone nemorosa* and woodruff *Galium odoratum*. Coedydd Y Barri/Barry Woodlands is notable for the large number of rare woodland plants that can be found amongst the ground flora. These include greater butterfly-orchid *Platanthera chlorantha*, thin-spiked wood-sedge *Carex strigosa*, wood millet *Milium effusum*, early purple-orchid *Orchis mascula*, twayblade *Listera ovata*, herb-paris *Paris quadrifolia*, goldilocks buttercup *Ranunculus auricomus* and sanicle *Sanicula europaea*. In total, about 150 species of vascular plants have been recorded here, making this group of woodlands one of the most species-rich of any type found in Wales.

Flushes, streams and small humid ravines add to the ecological diversity of the woodlands. There are also two areas of wooded swamp, associated with up-welling of lime-rich water, which support beds of great horsetail *Equisetum telmateia*.

Remarks:

The majority of the woods that make up Coedydd Y Barri/Barry Woodlands SSSI are included in the provisional Inventory of Ancient Woodland for Glamorgan. Parts of the SSSI are leased by the Forestry Commission.

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