

CITATION

**BÀGH THARSGABHAIG
SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST
Highland (Skye and Lochalsh)**

Site code: 117

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE: NG 587077

OS 1:50,000 SHEET NO: Landranger Series 32
1:25,000 SHEET NO: Explorer Series 412

AREA: 516.9 ha

NOTIFIED NATURAL FEATURES:

Geological : Structural and metamorphic geology Moine

DESCRIPTION:

Bàgh Tharsgabhaig Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) lies on the western side of the Sleat peninsula on the Isle of Skye. It displays nationally important features of the Moine Thrust Belt. The Moine Thrust is a major fracture in the Earth's crust, which runs along Scotland's north-western seaboard from Loch Eriboll on the north coast to the Sleat peninsula. The Thrust is one of the most important features of Highland geology and was formed around 430 million years ago during a mountain-building event known as the 'Caledonian Orogeny'.

At Bàgh Tharsgabhaig SSSI there are exposures of Torridonian rocks within the Kishorn Nappe and also exposures of the overlying Tarskavaig Nappe. The Tarskavaig Thrust, which separates the two nappes, is well displayed in this site and the deformation associated with the Thrust can easily be studied. The Bàgh Tharsgabhaig SSSI contains much of the information required for a full understanding of the rocks and structures of the Tarskavaig Nappe and thus provides a key to this part of the Moine Thrust Belt. The Tarskavaig Nappe, which lies below the Moine Thrust but above the Kishorn Nappe, is composed largely of a series of weakly metamorphosed sediments known as the Tarskavaig Group; these sediments get progressively younger away from the Lewisian rocks at their base, which is immediately adjacent to the Tarskavaig Thrust Plane.

In the coastal section of the SSSI, south of Bàgh Tharsgabhaig, the various lithologies of the Tarskavaig Group are well displayed and can be compared directly with the underlying Torridonian rocks. The Tarskavaig rocks are somewhat intermediate in character between certain Torridonian lithologies and parts of the overlying Moine so that different authorities have referred them to both successions. Much of the vital information necessary for an appraisal of their true geological affinities is located within this SSSI. The site also allows the structural relationships of the Tarskavaig Nappe to the Kishorn Nappe to be clearly appreciated.

NOTIFICATION HISTORY:

First notified under the 1949 Act: 1964 and 1974 as Tarskavaig Bay SSSI
Re-notified under the 1981 Act: 5 July 1984 as Bàgh Tharsgabhaig SSSI with a 405 ha decrease in area
Notification reviewed under the 2004 Act: 11 September 2009

REMARKS:

Measured area of site corrected (from 550 ha).