

## CITATION

**NORTH HARRIS**  
**SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST**  
Western Isles

Site code: 1236

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE: NB065115

OS 1:50,000 SHEET NO: Landranger Series 13  
1:25,000 SHEET NO: Explorer Series 456

AREA: 13165.58 hectares

## NOTIFIED NATURAL FEATURES

### Biological

<b>Non-vascular plants:</b>	<b>Bryophyte assemblage</b>
<b>Upland habitats:</b>	<b>Subalpine wet heath</b>

## DESCRIPTION:

North Harris SSSI is situated to the south of the expansive Lewis Peatlands, and is a fine example of an ecosystem which is the result of strongly oceanic conditions acting on some of the rockiest hills in Britain. Many features of this site are intermediate between those found on St Kilda and those found on mainland Lewisian and Moine hills.

Most of the vegetation is typical of acid peat uplands found on Lewisian gneiss and granite. The outstanding feature is the abundance of species poor wet heath and the occurrence of an oceanic hepatic mat bryophyte assemblage, including stands of the large endemic moss *Campylopus shawii*. This site is of great importance for this particular species at a European scale.

Water systems include running, oligotrophic and dystrophic dubh lochans.

The wildlife present reflects the range in plant communities.

## NOTIFICATION HISTORY

First notified under the 1949 Act: June 1974

Re-notified under the 1981 Act: 12 September 1984

Notification reviewed under the 2004 Act: 25 March 2011

## REMARKS

Measured area of site corrected (from 12920.56 ha).

North Harris SSSI is designated as North Harris Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for the European habitats and species listed below, and as North Harris Mountains Special Protection Area (SPA) for the birds listed below.

### Habitats:

Acid peat-stained lakes and ponds

Acidic scree

Alpine and subalpine heaths

Blanket bog

Clear water lakes or lochs with aquatic vegetation and poor to moderate nutrient levels

Depressions on peat substrates

Dry heaths

Montane acid grasslands

Plants in crevices on acid rocks

Wet heathland with cross-leaved heath

### Species:

Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*)

Freshwater pearl mussel (*Margaritifera margaritifera*)

Otter (*Lutra lutra*)

### Birds:

Golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*)