

CITATION**NORTH ROTHIEMURCHUS PINWOOD
SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST
HIGHLAND (Badenoch and Strathspey)**

Site code: 1241

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE: NH 930100

OS 1:50,000 SHEET NO: Landranger Series 36
1:25,000 SHEET NO: Explorer Series 403

AREA: 1509.75 hectares.

NOTIFIED NATURAL FEATURESGeological: **Quaternary geology and geomorphology: Quaternary of Scotland****Biological:****Woodlands: Native pinewood****Birds: Breeding bird assemblage****Birds: Capercaillie *Tetrao urogallus*****Birds: Crested tit *Lophophanes cristatus*****Birds: Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*****Birds: Scottish crossbill *Loxia scotica*****Non-vascular plants: Fungi assemblage****Non-vascular plants: Lichen assemblage****Invertebrates: Invertebrate assemblage****Vascular plants: Vascular plant assemblage****DESCRIPTION**

The North Rothiemurchus Pinewood lies to the east of the village of Aviemore, between the River Spey and the Cairngorm hills. Most of the site lies between 210m and 430m in altitude and it is an important component in the range of montane and sub-montane communities of the Cairngorm massif. The soils, derived mostly from glacial moraines of granitic and schistose material, give rise to predominantly acid-loving plant communities. Two of the main rivers draining the northern flanks of the Cairngorms, the River Luineag and the Am Beanaidh pass through the site.

The SSSI is notified for the range of landforms associated with past glacial and post glacial processes. It contains meltwater landforms such as eskers that formed on the northern flanks of the Cairngorms and Glen More during the wastage of the last ice sheet, approximately 10,000 years ago. These landforms form an integral part of the suite of earth science features for which the Cairngorms are internationally important.

The site contains Britain's second largest area of Caledonian forest including ancient and recently established woodland, juniper scrub, dry and wet heath, areas of bog woodland and clear water lochans.

The site has also been notified for its breeding bird assemblage and specifically for its breeding populations of capercaillie, crested tit, Scottish crossbill and osprey – birds, all typically linked to the native pinewoods.

The site is also an SSSI for its assemblages of invertebrates, lichens, fungi, and vascular plants. These assemblages are particularly rich and diverse and include populations of many rare species associated with native pinewoods such as *Leptura sanguinolenta* one of the longhorn beetle sp, the lichen *Bryoria furcellata*, 'tooth' fungi (*Bankera*, *Phellodon*, *Hydnellum* and *Sarcodon* genera) and twinflower *Linnaea borealis*.

NOTIFICATION HISTORY

First notified under the 1981 Act: 8 December 1988

Notification reviewed under the 2004 Act: 30 March 2009

REMARKS

Measured area of site corrected from 1564.35 ha.

North Rothiemurchus Pinewood SSSI is part of the Cairngorms Special Area of Conservation (SAC) designated for the European habitats and species listed below and part of the Cairngorms Special Protection Area (SPA) designated for the birds listed below.

Habitats:

- Acid peat-stained lakes and ponds
- Acidic scree
- Alpine and subalpine heaths
- Blanket bog
- Bog woodland
- Caledonian forest
- Clear-water lakes or lochs with aquatic vegetation and poor to moderate nutrient levels
- Dry grasslands and scrublands on chalk or limestone
- Dry heaths
- Hard-water springs depositing lime
- High-altitude plant communities associated with areas of water seepage
- Juniper on heaths or calcareous grasslands
- Montane acid grasslands
- Mountain willow scrub
- Plants in crevices on base-rich rocks
- Plants in crevices on acid rocks
- Species-rich grassland with mat-grass in upland areas
- Tall herb communities
- Very wet mires often identified by an unstable 'quaking' surface
- Wet heathland with cross-leaved heath

Species: Green shield-moss *Buxbaumia viridis*
Otter *Lutra lutra*

Birds: Capercaillie *Tetrao urogallus*
Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus*
Golden eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*
Merlin *Falco columbarius*
Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*
Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*
Scottish crossbill *Loxia scotica*

Part of the North Rothiemurchus SSSI overlaps with the River Spey Special Area of Conservation (SAC) designated for the European species listed below.

Species: Atlantic salmon *Salmo salar*
Freshwater pearl mussel *Margaritifera margaritifera*
Otter *Lutra lutra*
Sea lamprey *Petromyzon marinus*