

CITATION

ROWARDENNAN WOODLANDS SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST Stirling

Site code: 1387

PLANNING AUTHORITY: Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park Authority

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE: NS 404930, NS 393944, NS 373965,
NN 342054 NS 361988,

OS 1:50,000 SHEET NO: Landranger Series 56
1:25,000 SHEET NO: Explorer Series 347 and 364

AREA: 492.89 hectares

NOTIFIED NATURAL FEATURES

Biological: Woodlands: Upland oak woodland

DESCRIPTION

Rowardennan Woodlands Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is located on the east side of Loch Lomond and is made up of five woodland parcels that run from just south of Craig Royston SSSI across from Tarbet down to the Blair Burn across from Inchlonaig Island. The notified feature of upland oak woodland is part of the extensive oak woodlands found throughout Loch Lomondside.

The upland oak woodland is made up of ancient and long-established semi-natural woodland with mostly sessile oak *Quercus petraea* as well as long established woodland plantations derived from non-locally sourced pedunculate oaks, *Quercus robur* and their hybrid. The oaks often have a multi-stemmed structure suggesting that they were coppiced at some point in their history. The removal of the wood for coal producing bloomeries and from the managed coppice for bark and wood for tannins, created an open glade environment with relatively little understory shrub growth and a high continuous canopy. Areas of mixed canopy comprised of birch *Betula pubescens*, alder *Alnus glutinosa*, ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, wych elm *Ulmus glabra* and goat willow *Salix caprea* occur on the flushed shoreline, stream sides, inaccessible crags and localised areas of nutrient-rich soil. Hazel *Corylus avellana* is common in open areas. The steep terrain with many rock outcrops and wooded ravines is species-rich with bryophyte and flowering plant communities that are characteristic of western sessile oak woods. The character of the woodland changes from north to south, through the various parcels of woodland. This variability is due to the past land usages more so than differences in climate, soil, or species distribution.

The ground flora is characteristic of acid oak woodland being largely dominated by blaeberry *Vaccinium myrtillus*, wavy hair-grass *Deschampsia flexuosa* and mosses. Limited areas of groundwater flushing support more species-rich communities with

characteristic species such as the slender false-brome grass *Brachypodium sylvaticum*. Transitional communities characterised by alder, willow and bog myrtle *Myrica gale* have developed on the shore where seasonal flooding occurs; such communities are rare on Loch Lomondside.

The following natural features are not notified for the SSSI but add further interest to the site: There is a diverse small bird breeding community that includes wood warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*, pied flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca* and redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*. The invertebrate fauna is rich in species including a nationally-scarce species of ground beetle *Thalassophilus longicornis* and the bronze whirligig beetle *Gyrinus aeratus*.

The Dubh Lochan is within the Coille Mhor plantation. This small kettle-hole lochan has well developed emergent vegetation including beds dominated by the white water-lily *Nymphaea alba*, and the yellow water-lily *Nuphar lutea*, and transitional fen and reed swamp communities. The aquatic invertebrate communities include a large number of dragonfly species.

NOTIFICATION HISTORY

First notified under the 1949 Act: 1973

Re-notified under the 1981 Act: 6 February 1987 with a 460 ha increase in area.

Notification reviewed under the 2004 Act: 23 September 2010

REMARKS

Measured area of site corrected (from 505.6 ha)

All of Rowardennan Woodlands SSSI is within the Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park and the Loch Lomond Regional Park. The West Highland Way passes through 1.1km stretch of the SSSI.

Part of Rowardennan Woodlands SSSI is part of the Loch Lomond Woods Special Area of Conservation (SAC), which is designated for the European habitats and species listed below.

Habitats : Western acidic oak woodland
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Species : Otter (*Lutra lutra*)