

CITATION

SHEIGRA - OLDSHOREMORE SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST Highland (Sutherland)

Site code: 1419

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE: NC 192589

OS 1:50,000 SHEET NO: Landranger Series 9
1:25,000 SHEET NO: Explorer Series 446

AREA: 251.21 hectares

NOTIFIED NATURAL FEATURES

Biological : Coastlands : Machair
: Sand dunes

DESCRIPTION

Sheigra - Oldshoremore Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is located on the west coast of Sutherland, 3km northwest of Kinlochbervie. The site includes three bays (Sheigra, Oldshore Beg and Oldshoremore) which have nationally important areas of dune and machair habitat. This site has the best examples of these habitats in Sutherland and amongst the best in Britain.

Sand dunes (vegetation)

The bays at Oldshoremore and Oldshore Beg have mature dune ridges with marram grass *Ammophila arenaria* while the very exposed beach at Sheigra is backed by a boulder storm beach. Plants such as sea rocket *Cakile maritima* and common orache *Atriplex patula* grow near the strandline on these beaches. Behind the dune ridge, more stable low sand hills and hollows support tussocks of marram grass with grasses and sedges, such as sand couch grass *Elytrigia juncea subsp. boreoatlantica* and sand sedge *Carex arenaria*. A range of plants including purple milk vetch *Astragalus danicus* and bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*, common mouse-ear *Cerastium fontanum subsp. holosteoides*, northern marsh-orchid *Dactylorhiza purpurella*, red fescue *Festuca rubra* and lady's bedstraw *Galium verum* can also be found in this area.

Machair

Machair occurs inland of the dune habitats where the shell-rich sand has a major influence on the vegetation. The machair on this site is of very high quality and is species-rich, with at least 220 species of flowering plants. These herb-rich grasslands contain a wealth of locally unusual species, including globe flower *Trollius europaeus*, moss campion *Silene acaulis*, moonwort *Botrychium lunaria* and the nationally scarce hair sedge *Carex capillaris*. At least eight species or varieties of orchid grow in this habitat, including uncommon species such as frog orchid *Coeloglossum viride*.

/see overleaf

NOTIFICATION HISTORY

Notified under the 1949 Act as part of Southern Parphe SSSI: 1974 and 1979
Renotified under the 1981 Act as Sheigra - Oldshore More SSSI: 24 February 1987
with amended boundary
Notification reviewed under the 2004 Act: 31 March 2011

REMARKS

Measured area of site corrected (from 254.7 ha).
Site name amended from 'Sheigra - Oldshore More' to 'Sheigra - Oldshoremore'.

Sheigra - Oldshoremore SSSI is also part of Oldshoremore and Sandwood Special Area of Conservation (SAC) which is designated for the European habitats listed below.

Habitats : Dune grassland
 : Machair
 : Shifting dunes with marram