CITATION

BEINN IADAIN AND BEINN NA H-UAMHA
SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST
Highland (Lochaber)

Site code: 169

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE: NM 690535

OS 1:50,000 SHEET NO: Landranger Series 49
1:25,000 SHEET NO: Explorer Series 383

AREA: 1,616.21 ha

NOTIFIED NATURAL FEATURES:

Geological	**: Stratigraphy**	**Cenomanian – Maastrichtian**
Biological	**: Upland habitats**	**Upland assemblage**
	: Woodlands	**Upland oak woodland**
	: Vascular plants	**Vascular plant assemblage**

DESCRIPTION:
Beinn Iadain and Beinn na h-Uamha Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is situated near the centre of the Morvern peninsula in Lochaber. It contains the basalt summits of two hills, Beinn Iadain and Beinn na h-Uamha, which rise to about 500 metres, the highest basalt summits in Lochaber. These hills are of geological significance and also support high-altitude plant assemblages with some component species at their only locality in mainland Lochaber. The site is also important for its upland habitats and oak woodland.

The summits and slopes of Beinn na h-Uamha and Beinn Iadain contain the most complete Upper Cretaceous rock sequence visible anywhere in Scotland. This consists largely of Cenomanian Morvern greensand and Loch Aline glass sand overlain on Beinn Iadain by a Santoian – Campanian siliceous limestone. Between the glass sand and the limestone there is a fossil-rich Cenomanian clay. Of the few stratigraphically useful fossils known from the Upper Cretaceous of Scotland, the majority come from this site and these have enabled the Upper Cretaceous sediments of Western Scotland to be dated. The juxtaposition in this area of Precambrian Moine schist, Triassic, Lower Jurassic and Upper Cretaceous sediments and Tertiary Volcanics is unique.

The upper slopes and summits of the two hills also support a range of upland habitats, including open, stony flushes; unstable calcareous screes and basalt cliff ledges with tall herb communities which support a rich calcicolous montane flora including mountain avens, globeflower, holly fern and northern rock-cress. On the slopes below the crags is a herb-rich sub-alpine bent/fescue grassland with abundant alpine lady's mantle, a habitat which is unusual at this altitude in Lochaber. At lower levels, on the more acidic rocks, grasslands dominated by mat-grass and heath rush give way to purple moor-grass/heather heathland on shallow peats.

Along the north shore of Loch Arienas and in Gleann Dubh are remnants of native upland oak woodland. These are dominated by sessile oak with birch and rowan and more localised ash, hazel and holly. The ground cover includes herb-rich areas and patches of bryophyte-covered block scree.

The vascular plant assemblage comprises high-altitude species associated with base-rich rock and includes hairy stonecrop *Sedum villosum* at its only locality in mainland Lochaber, as well as the nationally rare Arctic sandwort *Arenaria norvegica*.

NOTIFICATION HISTORY:
First notified under the 1949 Act: 1962 as Beinn Iadain SSSI.
Re-notified under the 1981 Act: 24 October 1986 as Beinn Iadain and Beinn na h-Uamha SSSI with a 76.79 ha decrease in area.
Notification reviewed under the 2004 Act: 30 January 2009

REMARKS:

Measured area of site corrected from (1,619.37 ha)

Part of Beinn Iadain and Beinn na h-Uamha SSSI is designated as Beinn Iadain and Beinn na h-Uamha Special Area of Conservation for the European habitats listed below:

Habitats: Species-rich grassland with mat-grass in upland areas
Plants in crevices in base-rich rocks
Tall herb communities
High-altitude plant communities associated with areas of water seepage
Base-rich scree

and part of Beinn Iadain and Beinn na h-Uamha SSSI is designated as part of Morvern Woods Special Area of Conservation for the European habitats and species listed below:

Habitats: Western acidic oak woodland
Mixed woodland on base-rich soils associated with rocky slopes

Species: Otter (*Lutra lutra*)