

## CITATION

### BERRIEDALE WATER SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST Highland (Caithness)

Site code: 201

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE: ND108248

OS 1:50,000 SHEET NO: Landranger Series 17

OS 1:25,000 SHEET NO: Explorer Series 444

AREA: 215.54 hectares

## NOTIFIED NATURAL FEATURES

**Biological: Woodland: Upland birch woodland**

## DESCRIPTION

Berriedale Water Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is located approximately 7km southwest of Dunbeath in Caithness. The site is designated for its nationally important birch woodland habitat.

Native woodland is a rare habitat in Caithness and, along with Langwell Water SSSI just to the south, this is the largest native woodland in the county. The woodlands grow on the slopes surrounding the Berriedale Water. There are many large blocks of open, semi-natural broadleaf woodland dominated by downy birch *Betula pubescens* and rowan *Sorbus aucuparia*, together with aspen *Populus tremula* and willow *Salix sp.* Fragments of hazel *Corylus avellana* woodland can be found on dry sandstone outcrops whilst alder *Alnus glutinosa* grows in the wetter areas.

The ground flora is predominantly acid grassland with many woodland mosses and ferns, including hard fern *Blechnum spicant*, beech fern *Phegopteris connectilis* and oak fern *Gymnocarpium dryopteris*. The upper and drier slopes give rise to a more diverse woodland field layer including blaeberry *Vaccinium myrtillus*, chickweed wintergreen *Trientalis europaea*, wood sage *Teucrium scorodonia* and wood sorrel *Oxalis acetosella*.

## NOTIFICATION HISTORY

First notified under the 1949 Act: 1979

Re-notified under the 1981 Act: 16 July 1984 with a 58ha increase in area

Notification reviewed under the 2004 Act: 9 September 2010

## REMARKS

Measured area of site corrected from 222.7ha.

Part of Berriedale Water SSSI overlaps part of Berriedale and Langwell Waters Special Area of Conservation (SAC) which is designated for the European species:

Atlantic salmon *Salmo salar*