

## CITATION

**CAENLOCHAN**  
**SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST**  
Angus, Perth and Kinross, Aberdeenshire

Site code: 282

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE: N0 210770

OS 1:50,000 SHEET NO: Landranger Series 43, 44  
1:25,000 SHEET NO: Explorer Series 387, 388

AREA: 4974.75 hectares

## NOTIFIED NATURAL FEATURES

**Geological: Quaternary geology and geomorphology: Quaternary of Scotland**

**Biological: Upland habitats: Montane assemblage**  
**Freshwater habitats: Dystrophic loch**  
**Vascular plants: Vascular plant assemblage**  
**Non-vascular plants: Bryophyte assemblage**  
**Non-vascular plants: Lichen assemblage**  
**Invertebrates: Invertebrate assemblage**  
**Birds: Breeding bird assemblage**

## DESCRIPTION

Caenlochan is located at the head of Glen Clova, Glen Prosen and Glen Isla and is approximately 20 miles north of Kirriemuir. The site encompasses an extensive area of upland plateau, corries and glens at the southernmost extent of the Cairngorm mountain massif. The site is of importance for its variety of upland habitats and vegetation, its rare invertebrate and plant species, its breeding bird populations and the geology of Corrie Fee.

The site's varied geology and the relatively continental climate have allowed the development of a wide range of plants and plant assemblages, several of which are amongst the most extensive and representative of their type in Britain. The site is particularly notable for its assemblage of montane habitats comprising extensive sedge and lichen-dominated plateau communities, blanket bog, heathland, high altitude and base-rich flushes, base-rich and acid scree and cliff vegetation (including tall herb communities), and species-rich grassland. The site supports the largest single area of montane willow scrub in Britain in Corrie Fee, and on Meikle Kilrannoch, the highest outcrop of serpentine-like rock together with its unusual flora.

The site is renowned as one of the most important upland sites in Britain for alpine plants and is home to a larger number of nationally rare and montane vascular plants than any other British upland site. Of particular note are purple coltsfoot *Homogyne alpina* in its only British site, alpine catchfly *Lychnis alpina* which occurs on the serpentine on Meikle Kilrannoch at its only Scottish location, and the yellow oxytropis *Oxytropis campestris* which is found at only two British localities including Corrie Fee.

The site is also an important area for montane bryophytes and lichens, many of which are rare.

Loch Canness, a small nutrient-poor water body, is the highest in Angus.

There is a great abundance and density of upland invertebrates associated with the variety of montane plant communities including spiders, moths and flies. Rare species include the endangered *Callisto coffeella*, for which Caenlochan is one of only two sites in Scotland where this moth has been recorded and the spider *Mecynargus paetulus*, which is only found in eight sites in Scotland.

The high quality habitats support a characteristic assemblage of upland breeding bird species including important numbers of breeding dotterel and golden eagle.

Corrie Fee is important for palynological studies. The pollen stratigraphy from an infield basin inside a suite of Loch Lomond Re-advance moraines is supported by radiocarbon dating and provides an important record of Flandrian vegetation history, in particular of the montane flora of Scotland. The pollen record demonstrates the persistence of many of the montane species through much of the Flandrian period.

### **NOTIFICATION HISTORY**

First notified under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949: 1971, and again in 1973 as Caenlochan extension SSSI. A small part was notified as part of Glen Callater and Coire Kander SSSI.

Re-notified under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981: 29 November 1984 incorporating the then Caenlochan National Nature Reserve.

Notification reviewed under the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004:  
19 March 2010

### **REMARKS**

Measured area of site corrected (from 5043.92 hectares).

Caenlochan SSSI overlaps with most of Caenlochan Special Area of Conservation (SAC) which is designated for the European habitats listed below:

- Acidic scree
- Alpine and subalpine heaths
- Base-rich fens
- Base-rich scree
- Blanket bog
- Dry heaths
- Grasslands on soils rich in heavy metals
- High-altitude plant communities associated with areas of water seepage; Montane acid grasslands
- Mountain willow scrub
- Plants in crevices on acid rocks
- Plants in crevices on base-rich rocks
- Species-rich grassland with mat-grass in upland areas
- Tall herb communities.

A small part of Caenlochan SSSI overlaps with part of the River Tay SAC which is designated for the European habitats and species listed below:

Habitats: Clear-water lakes or lochs with aquatic vegetation and poor to moderate nutrient levels

Species: Atlantic salmon *Salmo salar*  
Brook lamprey *Lampetra planeri*  
River lamprey *Lampetra fluviatilis*  
Sea lamprey *Petromyzon marinus*  
Otter *Lutra lutra*.

Part of Caenlochan SSSI overlaps with part of Caenlochan Special Protection Area (SPA) which is designated for the birds listed below:

- Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus*
- Golden eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*