

CITATION

**CAIRNSMORE OF FLEET
SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST**
Dumfries and Galloway

Site code: 290

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE: NX 515665

OS 1:50,000 SHEET NO: Landranger Series 83
1:25,000 SHEET NO: Explorer Series 319

AREA: 3836.65 hectares

NOTIFIED NATURAL FEATURES

Biological: Bogs: Blanket bog
Upland habitats: Upland assemblage

DESCRIPTION

Cairnsmore of Fleet Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is a varied upland site lying 4km northeast of Creetown. The site is the best example in Wigtownshire/Stewartry of an unafforested granite massif of perched blocks, slabs and pavement, with continuity between low level moorland and montane grassland and dwarf shrub heath.

The area is wind-exposed and close to the western seaboard resulting in montane vegetation communities occurring at lower elevations than would be expected and in blanket bog with a rich bog moss *Sphagnum spp.* community. Flowering plants of interest include western gorse *Ulex gallii*, bog rosemary *Andromeda polifolia* and petty whin *Genista anglica*. Unusually for a granite massif, several calcicole plants occur on the site, including mossy saxifrage *Saxifraga hypnoides*, pale butterwort *Pinguicula lusitanica*, green spleenwort *Asplenium viride*, tawny sedge *Carex hostiana* and dioecious sedge *Carex dioica*.

Although not included as notified features, the area is also of interest for its characteristic upland fauna; peregrine falcon, raven, red grouse and meadow pipit all occur, as well as mountain hare, red deer and the largest herd of feral goats in the area. There is also significant invertebrate interest, with eight species of dragonfly recorded as well as a number of rare and local spiders.

NOTIFICATION HISTORY

First notified under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949: 1968.

Re-notified under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981: 30 June 1986, with a 1142 ha increase in area.

Notification reviewed under the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004: 17 November 2009.

REMARKS

Measured area of site corrected (from 3559.3 ha).