

## CITATION

**CALGARY DUNES**  
**SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST**  
Argyll & Bute

Site code: 296

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE: NM 372512

OS 1:50,000 SHEET NO: Landranger Series 47  
1:25,000 SHEET NO: Explorer Series 374

AREA: 23.17 hectares

## NOTIFIED NATURAL FEATURES

**Biological: Coastlands: Machair**

## DESCRIPTION

The Calgary Dunes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is situated on the north-west coast of the Isle of Mull, 6 kilometres west of Dervaig. The site consists of a stabilised dune plateau covered by calcareous machair grassland, which extends from the road in the east to a vestigial foredune on the western side of the site. This machair feature is one of only a few examples of this habitat on the Isle of Mull; an island characterised more typically by hard (rocky) coastal landscapes.

The grassland in the east of the site remains typical of Hebridean calcareous machair; a complex dune grassland habitat unique to north-west Scotland and Ireland. The dunes are unusual in that no marram grass foredune exists. The machair plateau is dominated by a wide range of locally scarce grasses, most notably sheep's fescue *Festuca ovina*, sweet vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, Yorkshire-fog *Holcus lanatus*, perennial rye-grass *Lolium perenne*. Herbaceous flowers are also abundant, the most conspicuous of which are wild thyme *Thymus praecox*, common bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*, cat's ear *Hypochaeris radicata* and eyebright *Euphrasia officinalis* agg. Other typical machair flowers occurring are fairy flax *Linum catharticum*, mouse-ear hawkweed *Hieracium pilosella*, autumn hawkbit *Leontodon autumnalis*, lesser meadow-rue *Thalictrum minus*, harebell *Campanula rotundifolia*, red clover *Trifolium pratense*, heath milkwort *Polygala serpyllifolia*, wild pansy *Viola tricolor* and common stork's-bill *Erodium cicutarium*. The grassland in the western reaches of the site supports more common, more resilient species having come under pressure from a combination of grazing and public pressure. The site remains popular with locals and tourists for recreation.

## NOTIFICATION HISTORY

First notified under the 1949 Act: 1974  
Re-notified under the 1981 Act: 30<sup>th</sup> June 1986  
Notification reviewed under the 2004 Act: **11 March 2011**

## REMARKS

Measured area of site corrected (from 23.5 ha)