

CITATION

**COILLE LEITIRE
SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST**
Argyll and Bute

Site code: 380

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE: NN 085266

OS 1:50,000 SHEET NO: Landranger Series 50
1:25,000 SHEET NO: Explorer Series 377

AREA: 97.54 hectares

NOTIFIED NATURAL FEATURES

Biological: Woodlands: Upland oak woodland

DESCRIPTION

Coille Leitire Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) lies approximately 1.5 km west of Lochawe village on the northern shore of Loch Awe, Argyll. The site extends from above the railway line and A85 public road, on the lower slopes of Ben Cruachan, to an altitude of approximately 300 m at its highest point. The site was notified for some of the most extensive areas of upland oak woodland in the Lorn and North Argyll area.

The site consists of one of the largest areas of native woodland habitat to be found in the Lorn area. The notified feature, upland oak wood, constitutes the majority of this native woodland mosaic. Most species representative of upland oak wood can be found distributed across the site with a preponderance of oak and birch, with fewer ash, elm, hawthorn, holly and rowan. There are also areas distributed across the site, but found predominantly to the west, which are more representative of woodlands associated with base-rich soils. To the east of the site there are additionally small areas of wet woodland associated with an alder-birch dominated canopy. The numerous streams which dissect the site have carved gorges which now support assemblages of ferns, mosses and liverworts which are dependent on deep shade and high humidity and which, although not notified in their own right, form an important aspect of this woodland ecosystem.

Although not a notified feature the site supports, in the numerous glades and areas of open ground above the woodland, substantial populations of pearl-bordered fritillary butterfly.

NOTIFICATION HISTORY

First notified under the 1949 Act: 1955, 1962, 1963, 1974 as Coille Leitire and Coille Driseig SSSI.

Re-notified under the 1981 Act: 30 May 1986 as Coille Leitire SSSI with a 34 ha net reduction in area.

Notification reviewed under the 2004 Act: 12 August 2010

REMARKS

Measured area of site corrected (from 101 ha)

Coille Leitire SSSI is part of the Loch Etive Woods Special Area of Conservation (SAC), which is designated for the European habitats and species listed below.

Habitats : Alder woodland on floodplains
 : Mixed woodland on base-rich soils associated with rocky slopes
 : Western acidic oak woodland
Species : Otter *Lutra lutra*