

CITATION

CRAGBANK AND WOLFEHOPELEE SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST Scottish Borders

Site code: 416

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE: NT 590073; NT591080

OS 1:50,000 SHEET NO: Landranger Series 80
1:25,000 SHEET NO: Explorer Series 331

AREA: 19.93 hectares

NOTIFIED NATURAL FEATURES

Biological: Woodlands: Upland mixed ash woodland
Invertebrates: Beetle assemblage

DESCRIPTION

Cragbank & Wolfhopelee Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is a composite woodland site, located 11km south-east of Hawick. It is composed of two discrete compartments of ancient native woodland, Cragbank and Wolfhopelee. The site is notified for its woodland habitat and beetle fauna.

Cragbank is the largest area of ancient ash-elm-hazel woodland remaining in the Borders. It has a diverse ground flora and a wider range of woodland types than elsewhere in the area. It is situated on a steep west-facing slope forming part of the eastern side of one of the more incised sections of the Catlee Burn. The native wood contrasts sharply with the extensive coniferous plantations that extend southwards from this point as Wauchope Forest.

Wolfhopelee occupies a steep sided gorge adjacent to Wolfhopelee Burn, to the north of Cragbank and at a right angle to its neighbour. It largely consists of wet alder woodland.

The site is important for beetles including several rare and nationally scarce species, and many are associated with dead or dying timber, of which there is plenty on the site. The beetle records for the site show the presence of 37 species, of which 23 species are recorded as being of very local distribution, and another 8 species of local distribution in the Scottish Borders. These records include the nationally scarce rove beetle *Phyllodrepa puberula*, the locally rare rove beetles *Dropephylla ioptera* and *Quedius plagiatus*, and the regionally rare leaf beetle, *Chrysomela aenea*.

The invertebrates and ground flora of the SSSI indicate the ancient, undisturbed nature of the site. There are several species of plants, lichens and invertebrates which are rare in the Borders.

NOTIFICATION HISTORY

First notified under the 1949 Act: 1949

Re-notified under the 1981 Act: 17 October 1983

Notification reviewed under the 2004 Act: 12 August 2010

REMARKS

Measured area of site corrected (from 21.1 ha).

Cragbank & Wolfhopelee SSSI is part of Border Woods Special Area of Conservation (SAC) which is designated for the European habitats listed below:

Habitats: Mixed woodland on base-rich soils associated with rocky slopes