

CITATION

CRAIGENGAR SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST

West Lothian / Scottish Borders / South Lanarkshire

Site code: 430

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE: NT 078549

OS 1:50,000 SHEET NO: Landranger Series 65
1:25,000 SHEET NO: Explorer Series 344

AREA: 303.5 hectares

NOTIFIED NATURAL FEATURES:

Biological: Bogs: Blanket bog
Biological: Upland habitats: Subalpine dry heath
Biological: Upland habitats: Spring-head, rill and flush
Biological: Vascular plants: Marsh saxifrage (*Saxifraga hirculus*)

DESCRIPTION:

Craigengar SSSI lies at the south west end of the Pentland Hills, 10km southeast of West Calder. It includes characteristic upland habitat types; subalpine dry heath, blanket bog and spring-head flush communities.

The summit and slopes of Craigengar Hill consist of dry heather moorland (subalpine dry heath) on a shallow peat base. Blaeberry *Vaccinium myrtillus*, cowberry *V. vitis-idaea* and crowberry *Empetrum nigrum* are all intermixed with the dominant heather. Cloudberry *Rubus chamaemorus* is widespread on the summit. The heather growth is healthy and shows little evidence of degradation or invasion by grass communities. The abundance of cloudberry and dwarf shrubs is unusual in the area.

Bawdy Moss is an upland raised bog in a natural hollow at the foot of Craigengar. There is evidence of past drainage but the site remains wet at the surface and has rich growths of bog mosses and hare's tail cottongrass. Several plants with restricted distribution in the Lothian area grow at this location, including bog asphodel *Narthecium ossifragum*, cranberry *Vaccinium oxycoccos* and round leaved sundew *Drosera rotundifolia*. Bawdy Moss represents the only example in the Lothian area of its habitat type.

The southern part of the site includes two upland cleughs (gorges), Garval Syke and Ravens Cleugh, which differ in character. Both cleughs have spring-head flush communities and areas rich in base minerals which support a wide variety of sedges and other wetland plants. Ravens Cleugh also has areas of steep dry slopes with subalpine calcareous grassland, soil slips and small scree slopes.

The flush communities within Garval Syke and Ravens Cleugh also host yellow marsh saxifrage *Saxifraga hirculus*, which is found in only seven locations in Britain. For this reason, part of the site is also designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) as detailed below.

NOTIFICATION HISTORY

First notified under the 1981 Act: 01 November 1988
Notification reviewed under the 2004 Act: 16 April 2009

REMARKS

Measured area of site corrected from 328 hectares

Part of Craigengar SSSI is designated as Craigengar Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for the European habitats and species listed below.

Habitats: Dry heaths
 Species-rich grassland with mat-grass in upland areas

Species: Marsh saxifrage (*Saxifraga hirculus*)