

CITATION

**CRAIG ROYSTON WOODS
SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST
Stirling**

Site code: 444

PLANNING AUTHORITY: Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park Authority

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE: NN 341072

OS 1:50,000 SHEET NO: Landranger Series 56

1:25,000 SHEET NO: Explorer Series 364

AREA: 94.15 hectares

NOTIFIED NATURAL FEATURES

Biological: Woodlands: Upland oak woodland
Invertebrates: Moth assemblage

DESCRIPTION

The Craig Royston Woods Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is located along the north-east side of Loch Lomond on steep west facing slopes south of Inversnaid. Craig Royston Woods are part of the extensive oak woodlands found throughout Loch Lomondside. The diversity of the understory vegetation and the age of the woodlands support a wide variety of moths.

Craig Royston Woods are made up of ancient natural woodland with mostly sessile oak *Quercus petraea* as well as long established woodland plantations derived from non-locally sourced pedunculate oaks, *Quercus robur* and their hybrid. The oaks often have a multi-stemmed structure suggesting that they were coppiced at some point. The removal of the wood from the managed coppice created an open glade environment with relatively little understory shrub growth and a high continuous canopy. Areas of mixed canopy comprised of birch *Betula pubescens*, alder *Alnus glutinosa*, ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* and wych elm *Ulmus glabra* occur on the flushed shoreline, stream sides, inaccessible crags and localized areas of nutrient-rich soil. Hazel *Corylus avellana* is common in open areas.

The steep terrain with many rock outcrops and wooded ravines supports species-rich bryophyte and flowering plant communities that are characteristic of western sessile oak woods. The occurrence of the nationally-uncommon Tunbridge filmy fern *Hymenophyllum tunbrigense*, Wilson's filmy fern *H. wilsonii* and *Hageniella micans*, which is a nationally very restricted moss, indicates the "Atlantic" nature of these woods. Localised outcrops of nutrient-rich rocks support species such as the green

spleenwort *Asplenium viride* and the purple saxifrage *Saxifraga oppositifolia* that are characteristic of this habitat and very sparsely distributed within the area.

The site is notified for its moths because it has the Red Book Data species vulnerable moth *Acleris abietana*, five nationally-scarce species, *Atemelia torquatella*, *Eupithecia plumbeolata*, *Olethreutes arcuella*, *Pammene albuginana*, *Scoparia ancipitella* and a long list of more common species.

Other fauna includes the largest breeding populations of pied flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca* within the Loch Lomond deciduous woodland. The woods support characteristic invertebrate populations including several colonies of the wood ant *Formica aquilonia* and a number of notable beetles.

NOTIFICATION HISTORY

First notified under the 1949 Act: 1973 as Craigrostan (north) SSSI

Re-notified under the 1981 Act as Craigrostan Woods SSSI: 22 April 1987 with a 33.4 ha net increase in area

Notification reviewed under the 2004 Act: 17 September 2010

REMARKS

Measured area of site corrected (from 94.5 ha).

Site name amended to Craig Royston Woods SSSI in 2010.

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

Habitats : Western acidic oak woodland

Species : Otter (*Lutra lutra*)