

CITATION**ALVIE
SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST
HIGHLAND (Badenoch and Strathspey)**

Site code: 53

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE: NH 874089 and NH 866096

OS 1:50,000 SHEET NO: Landranger Series 36
1:25,000 SHEET NO: Explorer Series 403

AREA: 339.01 hectares

NOTIFIED NATURAL FEATURES**Biological****Woodlands: Upland oak woodland****Fens: Hydromorphological mire range****Invertebrates: Invertebrate assemblage****Birds: Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*, breeding****DESCRIPTION**

Alvie SSSI is a large area of native woodland, open water and wetland habitats situated in Strathspey, 3km south of Aviemore. It lies between the Monadhliath mountains and the River Spey and ranges from 220m to 358m at Torr Alvie.

Alvie SSSI contains a range of woodland types. Torr Alvie supports extensive mixed birch woodland, including downy birch *Betula pubescens* and silver birch *B. pendula*, in places associated with aspen, *Populus tremula*, rowan, *Sorbus aucuparia*, Scots pine, *Pinus sylvestris*, oak, *Quercus petraea* and juniper, *Juniperus communis*. Scots pine achieves local dominance to the west of the site, while a stand of pure oak woodland to the south represents one of the few occurrences of oak in mid Strathspey. Wet birch and alder woods with willow *Salix spp* scrub occur around Loch Alvie and Loch Beag.

Loch Alvie and Loch Beag are fed by streams originating in the Monadhliath mountains which drain into the Bogach, which in turn discharges into the River Spey. The largest of these lochs is Loch Alvie which is mesotrophic (medium nutrient status) whilst the Bogach and Loch Beag are considered eutrophic (high nutrient status). All three lochs are surrounded by large areas of inter-connected wetland habitats including aquatic communities, reedbeds, deep-water transition swamps, marginal swamps, transition mire, fen meadow and carr woodland. The range of fen and mire communities is outstanding with over twenty different types of vegetation communities present and as many sub communities which in a relatively small area makes this wetland site very diverse.

This site is important for the variety of scarce invertebrate species that it supports, including flies, beetles, butterflies and moths. Many of these invertebrates are

aquatic or require wet conditions in at least part of their life-cycle and they are therefore associated with the fen habitats. Others are associated with aspen woodland, bog and river shingle habitats. Notable species include the endangered net-winged caddis fly *Hagenella clathrata* which is at its most northerly known location in the UK, a snail-killing fly *Pherbellia brunnipes*, a beetle *Olophrum fuscum*, the aspen hoverfly, *Hammerschmidtia ferruginea* and a true fly *Microprosopa pallidicauda* which in Scotland has only been found in Strathspey.

Loch Alvie is an important breeding area for goldeneye *Bucephala clangula* and was one of the first breeding sites for this duck in the UK.

NOTIFICATION HISTORY

First notified under the 1949 Act: 1964

Re-notified under the 1981 Act: 27 March 1987 with a 38 ha net increase in area.

Notification reviewed under the 2004 Act: 17 November 2009

REMARKS

Measured area of site corrected from 341.6 ha

A strip along the western bank of the River Spey is part of Alvie SSSI and overlaps part of the River Spey SSSI and the River Spey Special Area of Conservation (SAC), which are both designated for the species listed below:

Species: Atlantic salmon *Salmo salar*
Sea lamprey *Petromyzon marinus*
Freshwater pearl mussel *Margaritifera margaritifera*
Otter *Lutra lutra*