

## CITATION

### EIGG - AN SGURR AND GLEANN CHARADAIL SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST Highland (Lochaber)

Site code: 600

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE: NM 453858

OS 1:50,000 SHEET NO: Landranger Series 39  
1:25,000 SHEET NO: Explorer Series 397

AREA: 957.16 ha

#### NOTIFIED NATURAL FEATURES:

<b>Geological</b>	<b>: Igneous petrology</b>	<b>Tertiary igneous</b>
<b>Biological</b>	<b>: Coastlands</b>	<b>Maritime cliff</b>
	<b>: Upland habitats</b>	<b>Subalpine dry heath</b>
	<b>: Woodlands</b>	<b>Scrub</b>

#### DESCRIPTION:

The Eigg – An Sgurr and Gleann Charadail Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) occupies the south west part of the island of Eigg and encompasses a range of habitats including maritime cliffs, extensive scrub and an area of upland heath lying on the pitchstone ridge which links An Sgurr and Beinn Tighe.

The site's primary geological interest lies in the mass of columnar pitchstone which builds An Sgurr, the largest occurrence of this rock-type in the British Isles. It is thought to be around 52 million years old and is thus one of the younger igneous rocks of the Tertiary Igneous. The site also provides a cross-section through 200 meters of the lava pile of Eigg on which the pitchstone rests.

The steep basalt cliffs around the coast support ungrazed ledge communities with characteristic species such as roseroot and sea campion. Throughout the cliffs, flushed gullies support species typical of wet, base-rich conditions such as opposite-leaved golden saxifrage and yellow mountain saxifrage. The lower cliffs are dominated by a range of mainly mesotrophic grasslands.

On less exposed cliffs, in particular around Laig, there are areas of scrub with hawthorn, wych elm and rowan. Further away from the coast the scrub is dominated by willows. Following the Allt a' Bhlair Dhuibh and Gleann Charadail for over 3 km. the willow scrub forms the most extensive area of this habitat type within Lochaber.

Much of the upland part of the site is dominated by heather. However, the influence of the basalt allows the widespread occurrence of calcicolous species such as pyramidal bugle. Along the cliff tops on the base-rich soils a number of montane calcicole species occur, including mountain avens, alpine willowherb, moss campion and purple saxifrage.

#### NOTIFICATION HISTORY:

First notified under the 1949 Act: 1964, 1974 and 1981 as part of Eigg SSSI  
Re-notified under the 1981 Act: 12 December 1988 with an increase in area  
Notification reviewed under the 2004 Act: 30 April 2009

#### REMARKS:

Measured area of site corrected (from 968.1 ha)