

CITATION

**GLEN LOCHAY WOODS
SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST**
Stirling

Site code: 712

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE: NN 531350, NN 538355

OS 1:50,000 SHEET NO: Landranger Series 51
1:25,000 SHEET NO: Explorer Series 378

AREA: 216.36 hectares

NOTIFIED NATURAL FEATURES

Biological: Woodland	: Upland birch woodland
	: Upland oak woodland
	: Wet woodland
	: Upland mixed ash woodland
: Invertebrates	: Invertebrate assemblage

DESCRIPTION

Glen Lochay Woods Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is situated on the slopes of Glen Lochay, approximately 5 km west of Loch Tay. The site supports a rich diversity of woodland types which together form one of the most extensive ancient deciduous woodlands in the Stirling district. The mosaic of woodland types also provides suitable habitat for a range of invertebrates including several notably rare species.

The woodland canopy within Glen Lochay Woods SSSI is dominated by downy birch with extensive stands of pure birch occurring on the upper slopes, where soils are thinner. These stands of birch are relatively recent in origin and have no shrub understorey layer. The field layer under the upper birch woodlands is typically acidic and supports species such as purple moor grass *Molina caerulea*, sharp-flowered rush *Juncus acutiflorus*, bog asphodel *Narthecium ossifragum*, cross leaved heath *Erica tetralix* and Sphagnum species such as *S. papillosum*.

On the lower slopes with deeper soils ancient sessile oak occurs and becomes co-dominant with birch. The oak woodland primarily occurs on rocky knolls and in these areas the shrub layer is locally well-developed and dominated by hazel. The oak woodland field layer is predominantly grassy with common bent grass *Agrostis capillaris*, wavy hair-grass *Deschampsia flexuosa* and sweet vernal grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum*. Bryophytes such as *Polytrichum formosum*, *Rhytidiadelphus loreus* and *R. triquetrus* are also common.

Wetter parts of the woodland are dominated by alder *Alnus glutinosa* which occurs alongside burns and flushes. In these regions the field layer typically supports Sphagnum mosses *S. papillosum* and *S. squarrosum* as well as tufted hair-grass *Deschampsia caespitosa*, marsh thistle *Cirsium palustre* and bugle *Ajuga reptans*.

Small pockets of hazel occur throughout the site where there is localised base enrichment. Ash, rowan and holly also occur in the canopy in these areas, with aspen and bird cherry limited to a few burnside locations. The field layer of this woodland type is more diverse and

includes species such as false brome *Brachypodium sylvaticum*, dog's mercury *Mercurialis perennis*, common dog violet *Viola riviniana*, primrose *Primula vulgaris*, and wood avens *Geum urbanum*. At higher altitudes willow scrub occurs and is a rare woodland transitional feature in the Stirling district.

Associated with the woodland are a number of other habitats including heathland, grassland, running and still waters. It is precisely the range of woodland types and the transitions between them which make this site one of the most diverse woodlands in the Stirling district.

The rich habitat mosaic of Glen Lochay woods also supports a large variety of invertebrates including the Biodiversity Action Plan priority crane fly species *Lipsothrix errans* and the Red Data Book listed dragonfly *Somatochlora arctica*, stilt fly *Calobata stylifera* and fungus gnat *Mycomya clavigera* which utilise the woodland and wetland habitats within the SSSI. Several beetle species which are restricted to ancient woodland, such as *Hylecoetus dermestoides*, also occur within the SSSI highlighting the long established nature of this woodland.

NOTIFICATION HISTORY

First notified under the 1981 Act: 30 March 1990

Notification reviewed under the 2004 Act: 16 December 2010

REMARKS

Measured area of site corrected (from 217.5 ha)

Part of Glen Lochay Woods SSSI is part of the River Tay Special Area of Conservation (SAC), which is designated for the European habitats and species listed below.

- Habitats : Clear-water lakes or lochs with aquatic vegetation and poor to moderate nutrient levels
- Species : Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*)
- : Brook lamprey (*Lampetra planeri*)
- : River lamprey (*Lampetra fluviatilis*)
- : Sea lamprey (*Petromyzon marinus*)
- : Otter (*Lutra lutra*)