

CITATION

LACESSTON MUIR AND GLEN BURN GORGE SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST Fife, Perth and Kinross

Site code: 886

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE: NO 185064

OS 1:50,000 SHEET NO: Landranger Series 58
1:25,000 SHEET NO: Explorer Series 370

AREA: 100.37 hectares

NOTIFIED NATURAL FEATURES

Geological : Stratigraphy : Non-marine Devonian
: Igneous Petrology: Carboniferous - Permian Igneous

Biological : Upland habitats : Subalpine dry heath

DESCRIPTION

Lacesston Muir and Glen Burn Gorge Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is located 3 km south of the village of Gateside on the western face of West Lomond Hill.

The site includes steep escarpment slopes of the hill ground, which give way below to a gently sloping shelf at 175-270 m. Glen Burn Gorge runs along the southern edge of the site. Rock outcrops occur along the escarpment slopes and in the gorge. The full altitudinal range is 170-400 m.

The Upper Devonian age (385-359 million years ago) rocks in the stream section and crags of Glen Vale and Glen Burn contain sandstone known as the 'John Knox's Pulpit Formation' which shows strong evidence of a wind-blown origin. This is in contrast to Upper Devonian rocks elsewhere in the Midland Valley, most of which formed in a river setting. Moreover, the crag exposures at the John Knox's Pulpit Rock permit excellent 3-dimensional sections of the principal sedimentary structures, and thus are of national importance.

The scarps of Lacesston Muir are representative of the Midland Valley Sill: the most extensive and important single intrusion complex of Central Scotland and a principal component of the Carboniferous and Permian Volcanic Province. Within the site, the transgressive nature of the sill's junctions with the overlying and underlying sediments can be demonstrated and in several localities a suite of contact phenomena can be seen.

Lacesston Muir and Glen Burn Gorge SSSI includes the most extensive remaining area of 'upland' heath in North East Fife. The site contains soligenous bogs; grassland and remnant gorge woodland, and supports a particularly diverse vascular plant flora, including outlying populations of several typically 'northern-montane'

species such as the nationally rare hairy stonecrop *Sedum villosum* and chickweed willowherb *Epilobium alsinifolium*. This is the only known locality in North East Fife for mossy saxifrage *Saxifraga hypnoides*, cowberry *Vaccinium vitis-idaea* and alpine bistort *Persicaria vivipara*.

The site also supports breeding bird communities representative of heathland habitats including red grouse and stonechat.

NOTIFICATION HISTORY

First notified under the 1981 Act: 1 June 1985

Notification reviewed under the 2004 Act: 5 August 2010 and

19 May 2017 (citation only)

REMARKS

Measured area of site corrected (from 101 ha).