

ALLT GRUG GARN

Between Pennant and Cilcennen, Ceredigion

Grid References	O.S. Explorer map 199 Lampeter. Main entrance; SN517617, Site centre; SN518617
Status	None
Tenure	Leased from the Forestry Commission in 1965, the site was subsequently purchased in 1986.
Size	0.38 ha (0.94 acres).
Location and Access Notes	Take B4337 from Llanrhystud, turn west on unsigned road at SN541625. First right after 4.5km and 400m takes you to Grug Garn farm gate. Road access opposite Grug Garn Farm entry, where there is space for one car and one opposite but take care on the soft verge. Access is obtained by stepping over the single strand wired hedge <u>opposite</u> the gate. A cleared path becomes evident, follow this to the plain wire fence surrounding the reserve. No access for wheelchairs. Access by permit only
Public transport	Limited buses – 586 from Aberaeron stops within 2km, but there is no return bus on the same day.

Description

Relic lowland heathland with oak and birch invasion.

The southern third of the site contains the remains of an old plantation, while the northern two thirds is made up of tall old heathland growing on 80cm of peat.

Heather should show a cyclical succession where pioneer, building, senescent, and degenerating stages give way to one another over a 30-50 year period. Studies on this site, since 1976, indicates that there is very little heather regeneration, but instead a considerable successional pressure. Western Gorse (7-11) has invaded the site followed by Birch, Rowan (5-6) and Willow with a further threat from Beech.

The senescent Heather (8-10) bushes show a classic sequence of lichens and bryophytes around their bases, including 7 species of *Parmelia*, 2 *Ramalina*, and *Unsea florida*, the latter indicating particularly clean air quality. Narrow buckler fern (*Dryopteris carthusiana*) is also present.

There is also an unusual fungi association to be found. False Truffle *Elaphomyces muricatus* occur in the leaf litter amongst the Birch, together with their fungal parasite the Club fungus *Cordiceps ophioglossoides*, whose striking fruiting bodies show up amongst the carpet of green moss, *Dicranum scoparium*. Invertebrates include the Emperor moth.

Management Objectives

Management has tried to arrest succession by removing all the birch seedlings, but has failed, and the reserve will almost certainly become secondary oak/birch woodland within 25 years.

Good times to visit

<i>March - August</i>	<i>Woodland flowers</i>
<i>September - November</i>	<i>Fungi</i>

