

EC Directive 92/43 on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora

Citation for Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

Name: Subberthwaite, Blawith and Torver Low Commons
Unitary Authority/County: Cumbria
SAC status: Designated on 1 April 2005
Grid reference: SD269896
SAC EU code: UK0030285
Area (ha): 1865.17
Component SSSI: Subberthwaite, Blawith and Torver Low Commons SSSI

Site description:


This site in south-west Cumbria supports some of the best examples of transition mires and quaking bogs in the UK, with over 200 mires on a broad hilly plateau. The mires are of particular interest and four main types occur within the site. Valley mires, which are peatlands with a central watercourse, are the most important, and the area contains the greatest concentration and extent of the habitat in Cumbria. Basin mires (developed in rock basins, with no stream), flushes (wet hillside mires) and swamps (found on tarn edges) are also present. A large variety of different plant communities occur in these mires, sometimes in mosaics or showing transitions to other habitats such as tarns.

The mires are dominated by tall sedges and rushes with mixed herbs, over a ground layer of bog-mosses *Sphagnum* spp. and feather-mosses including *Calliergon cuspidatum*. Twenty-six vegetation types are represented, including *Carex rostrata* – *Sphagnum recurvum* mire, *C. rostrata* – *Calliergon cuspidatum/giganteum* mire, and *C. rostrata* – *Potentilla palustris* tall-herb fen.

Depressions on peat substrates are widespread, both in bog pools, mires and in flushes where they occur as part of a mosaic associated with valley bog and wet heath. They show extensive representation of white beak-sedge *Rhynchospora alba* and are also important for great sundew and bog orchid *Hammarbya paludosa*.

Qualifying habitats: The site is designated under **article 4(4)** of the Directive (92/43/EEC) as it hosts the following habitats listed in Annex I:

- Depressions on peat substrates of the *Rhynchosporion*. (Depressions on peat substrates)
- Transition mires and quaking bogs. (Very wet mires often identified by an unstable 'quaking' surface)

This citation relates to a site entered in the Register of European Sites for Great Britain.
Register reference number: UK0030285
Date of registration: 14 June 2005
Signed: 
On behalf of the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs