

62. Rhos Pil Bach and Pennar Fawr

Plwmp, Ceredigion

Grid References	O.S Explorer map 198Cardigan and New Quay. Main entrance: SN369528. Site centre: SN368529
Status	Notified SSSI.
Tenure	The freehold of the reserve was purchased in 1982 with a loan from RSNC's Land Fund and grant aid from NCC and WWF.
Size	27.4 ha (67.6 acres)
Location and Access Notes	Turn north off the A487 at the Post Office in the village of Plwmp, bearing right after a short distance. After 300 m from the village, you will see a track leading down to the fields at SN369527. Inaccessible for wheelchairs.
Public Transport	The X50-554 between Aberystwyth and Cardigan stops in Plwmp about 0.5km from the reserve.

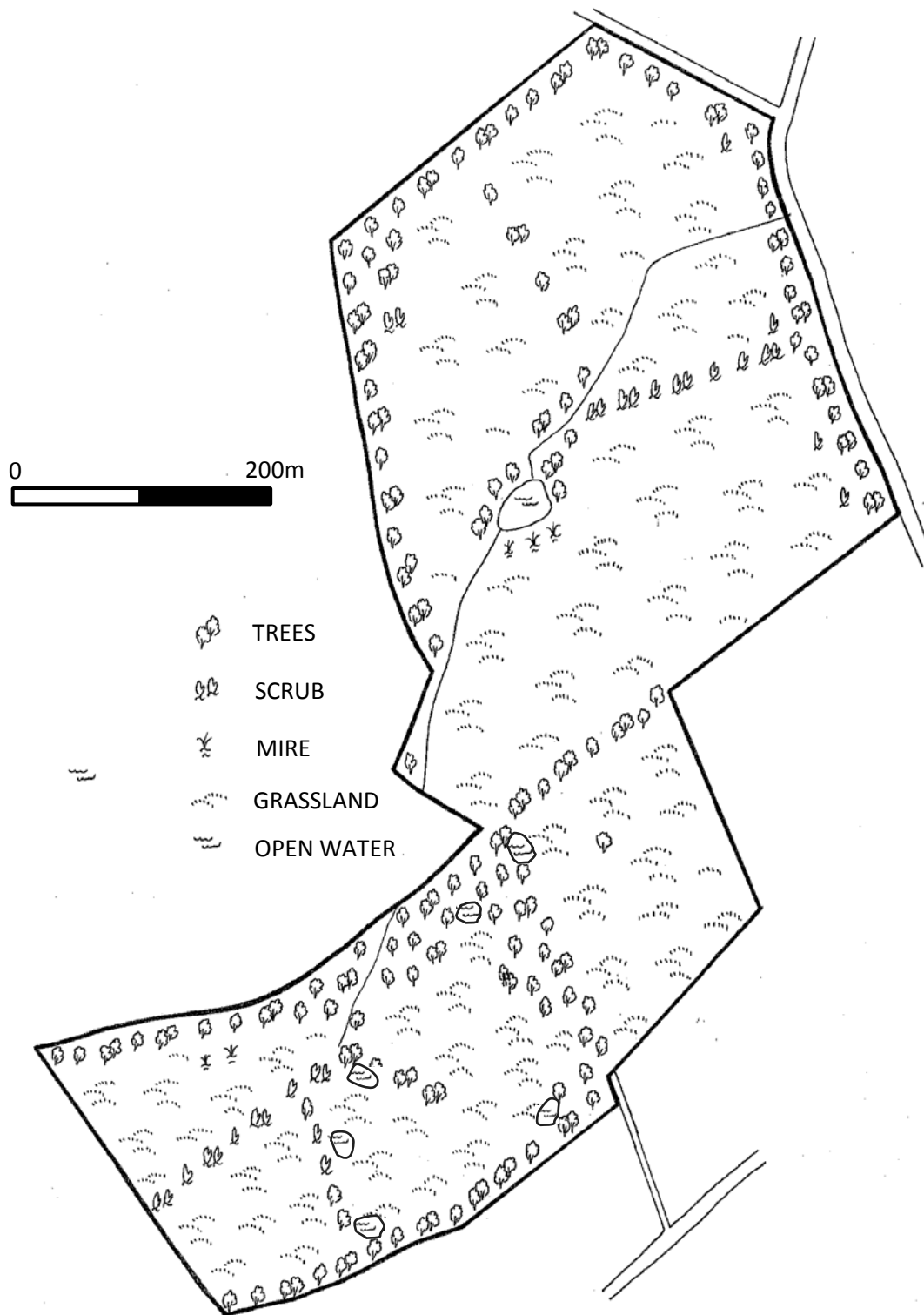
Description: Purple Moor Grass and Rush pasture with ancient hedgerows, a tract of lowland wet heath, and ponds.

Rhos Pil Bach is made up of five pasture fields enclosed by ancient banks and hedgerows. The two north-eastern fields are examples of ridge and furrow pasture, with the eastern field of the two being the most species rich, with up to 28 species of flowering plant per 1 m sq.

The sward is characterised by Brown Bent, Purple Moor Grass, Sweet Vernal Grass and Yorkshire Fog with Common Sedge and Carnation Sedge. The site is rich in orchids, particularly Heath Spotted Orchid (5-7), but also Common Spotted (6-7) and Northern Marsh Orchid (6-7). Other notable flowering plants include Bog Asphodel (6-8), Bog Pimpernel (6-9), Devil's-bit Scabious (7-9) (the food plant of Marsh Fritillary butterfly (5-7)), Meadow Thistle (6-9), and Ragged Robin (5-9). The diversity of the site is increased by the presence of six ponds.

Pennar Fawr is similar in nature but more tussocky in structure. It is a single open compartment of just over 16 ha and provides a refuge for many snipe in the winter months. There is also some drier heath to the north east of the reserve and a pond in the centre.

Adder have been recorded on the site.



Management objectives: The whole reserve is grazed by cattle in the summer, which maintains the botanical interest and also provides the variable sward height required by the Marsh Fritillary butterfly. Scrub is managed to prevent it spreading excessively into the grassland. A small enclosure demonstrates the effect that grazing has had on the reserve.

Good times to visit

Apr-Jul	Breeding birds
May-Aug	Butterflies and other insects
Jun	Marsh Fritillary
May-Sept	Grassland flowers