

COUNTY: Cornwall

SITE NAME: BOCONNOC PARK & WOODS

DISTRICT: Caradon

Status: Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

Local Planning Authority: Cornwall County Council, Caradon District Council

National Grid Reference: SX 144 603 Area: 50.4 (ha) 124.5 (ac)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 200 1:10,000: SX 16 SW, SX 15 NW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1977 Date of Last Revision: –

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1986 Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

Boundary amended by extensions and deletions.

Description and Reasons for Notification:

Boconnoc park and Woods is located approximately 4 km east of Lostwithiel in central Cornwall. The site lies within the enclosed parkland and woodland of the Boconnoc Estate, in the sheltered upper valley of the River Lerryn. The site incorporates Colliershill Wood, the wooded area of the Deer Park, the Lake and adjacent Willow carr, plus other isolated stands of trees within agricultural land.

Boconnoc is underlain by Meadfoot Beds of Lower Devonian age. These consist of calcareous slates and grits, which give rise to well-drained fine loamy or fine silty soils; with deposits of alluvium in the stream valleys.

The enclosed parkland and woodland at Boconnoc is of international importance for its particularly rich and diverse lichen flora. Some 188 species of epiphytic lichens have been recorded here; the largest recorded number for any site of comparable size in Western Europe. Boconnoc Park and Woods are especially rich in *Lobaria*- and *Usnea*-type lichens. The lichen flora includes 52 old forest species. While 21 of the 188 recorded lichen species are national rarities, Boconnoc is the only known British site for *Porina hibernica*. In addition *Arthonia leucopellaea*, *Pannaria mediterranea* and *Lecanactis corticola* have only been recorded from a few other British sites. Other nationally rare lichen species include *Lithographa dendrographa*, *Parmelia borrieri*, *Lecanora jamesii*, *Arthonia stellaris*, *Biatorrella ochrophora*, and *Ochrolechia inversa*. A further 31 species are ancient woodland indicators and are locally rare. Several of these rare lichen species have been recorded from single trees within Boconnoc Park, which benefits from the high rainfall, humidity and light intensity which occurs within the parkland and woodland glades.

The Estate has a long tradition of deer park management, some of the trees in the park being over 300 years old thereby promoting the continued growth of the rare lichen species.

The Deer Park is dominated by Beech *Fagus sylvatica*, with abundant Oak *Quercus sp* and a sparse understorey. The groundcover is dominated by Bracken. Ash *Fraxinus excelsior* is more abundant on the fringes of the wet tributary valley, on the north side of the Deer Park where tussock Sedge *Carex pendiculata* occurs. These Ash trees and the dense Willow *Salix sp* carr around the Lake are of particular importance for some of the rare lichens, as are the isolated clumps of Oak, Ash and Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus* to the west of south of Boconnoc House.

The mixed broadleaved ancient woodland of Colliershill Wood to the north of the site supports an abundance of mature Beech which is locally dominant in places, particularly to the north. Ash, Sessile Oak *Quercus petraea*, and the invasive species Sycamore are also frequent, together with Pedunculate Oak *Quercus robur*, and Sweet Chestnut *Castanea sativa*. The understorey supports species such as Holly *Ilex aquifolium*, Hazel *Corylus avellana*, Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, Elder *Sambucus nigra*, and Rhododendron *Rhododendron ponticum*. Bramble *Rubus fruticosus* dominates much of the ground flora although one of the more interesting herb species is the uncommon woodland grass Wood Millett *Milium effusum*.

An additional interest at Boconnoc are the 9 recorded Dragonfly species, most notably the Broad-bodied Chaser *Libellula depressa* and the Emperor Dragonfly *Anax imperator*.

Site notified to Secretary of State on 14 November 1986