

CITATION

BERNERA ISLAND SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST Argyll and Bute

Site code: 199

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE: NM 795395 NM 795390

OS 1:50,000 SHEET NO: Landranger Series 49
1:25,000 SHEET NO: Explorer Series 376

AREA: 42.47 hectares

NOTIFIED NATURAL FEATURES

Biological: Coastlands: Maritime cliff

DESCRIPTION

Bernera Island SSSI is located off the western shore of Lismore Island; the SSSI encompasses the whole of the limestone island of Bernera and has been notified for the feature of Maritime Cliff.

Coastal processes have a strong influence on the composition of this habitat with clear zonation ranging from vegetated and un-vegetated crevices and ledges on cliff slopes to lichen-covered rocks, maritime grassland and heath on cliff tops. The island consists of hard limestone rock; this is reflected in the diversity of species found on the island. While the cliff is never particularly large or dramatic it has an excellent selection of characteristic maritime species.

In addition to the notified maritime habitats, the site has a high diversity of species and base-rich habitats including ash woodland, scrub, base flushes, base-rich grassland and heath. The woodland and scrub is restricted to slopes and exposures and comprises ash, rowan, yew, hawthorn, blackthorn and holly. Also present is the notable species of rock whitebeam *Sorbus rupicola*, which is uncommon in Argyll and nationally scarce. Tall-herb communities also occur in these fragments of woodland. The nationally-scarce plant species spring cinquefoil *Potentilla tabernaemontani* is present. The flora of the island is extremely rich, particularly in calcareous plants, both in the limestone grassland pastures and in the small fragments of woodland and scrub.

NOTIFICATION HISTORY

First notified under the 1949 Act: 1974

Re-notified under the 1981 Act: 30 April 1986 with a 4.8 ha decrease in area.

Notification reviewed under the 2004 Act: 13 May 2010

REMARKS

Measured area of site corrected (from 44.1ha)

Bernera Island SSSI is designated as part of the Eileanan agus Sgeiran Lios mor Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for the European species listed below:

Species : Common seal *Phoca vitulina*