

**CYNGOR CEFN GWLAD CYMRU
COUNTRYSIDE COUNCIL FOR WALES**

SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST: CITATION

SITE NAME: Llanishen and Lisvane Reservoir Embankments

UNITARY AUTHORITY: Cardiff County Council

DATE OF NOTIFICATION: 26 September 2005

SITE AREA: 6.2 ha

Local Planning Authority: Cardiff County Council

National Grid Reference: ST 188819

OS Maps: 1:50,000 Sheet number: 171
1:10,000 Sheet number: ST18 SE

Description

Llanishen and Lisvane Reservoir Embankments is of special interest for its diverse assemblage of grassland fungi, including over 25 species of waxcap *Hygrocybe spp.*

The site comprises the grassy embankments surrounding Llanishen and Lisvane Reservoirs, situated within the Lisvane district of north Cardiff, at an altitude of approximately 50m. The embankments are artificial and consist of puddle clays and coarser materials including ballast, sand, shingle and stone. Both Reservoirs are underlain by the St Maughan's formation of the Lower Devonian age, consisting of red mudstones, calcrites and sandstones. Lisvane Reservoir was constructed in 1864 to supply water to Cardiff with Llanishen Reservoir added later in 1886, to supply the rapidly expanding Cardiff Docks.

The soils overlaying the embankments are variable in depth, wetness, base richness and aspect, which have contributed to the development of a variety of grassland types. For the most part these grasslands can be described as semi-improved, varying from neutral in character, typified by species such as sweet vernal grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, red fescue *Festuca rubra* and common bent *Agrostis capillaris* and black knapweed *Centaurea nigra* to more calcareous, characterised by *Briza media*, downy oat-grass *Helictotrichon pubescens*, birds foot trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*, rough hawkbit *Leontodon hispidus* and glaucous sedge *Carex flacca*. There are also areas of rank grassland dominated by the grasses tall fescue *Festuca arundinacea*, false oat-grass *Arrhenatherum elatius* and cock's-foot *Dactylis glomerata*.

This mosaic of grassland types has contributed to the development of a rich grassland fungal community. Species of particular note include the crazed cap *Dermoloma cuneifolium*, smoky spindles *Clavaria fumosa*, the earth tongue *Geoglossum fallax* and more than 25 species of waxcaps, *Hygrocybe aurantiosplendens*, *H. calyptiformis*, *H. citrinovirens*, *H. colemanniana*, *H. flavipes*, *H. fornicata*, *H. glutinipes*, *H. ingrata*, *H. intermedia*, *H. irrigata*, *H. punicea*, *H. quieta* and *H. splendidissima*. These species are distributed throughout the site, with the diversity of waxcap species being particularly noteworthy.