SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: ARDOGOMMON WOOD

SITE CODE: 001470

Ardogommon Wood is found on the more rocky parts of the limestone drift, with outcrops of bedrock and steep slopes on the hills just south-east of Westport. The area of interest is on a steep slope overlooking the railway and has a partly planted and partly natural origin.

A line of beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) follows the railway, but elsewhere the largest trees are Sessile Oak (*Quercus petraea*), Pedunculate Oak (*Q. robur*), Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), Goat Willow (*Salix caprea*), Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and Downy Birch (*Betula pubescens*). The latter becomes more frequent towards the top of the slope, with Grey Willow (*Salix cinerea*) and some Rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*) also present. Hazel (*Corylus avellana*) is the most common understorey species, and forms some of the canopy also.

The ground vegetation is grazed quite heavily but includes a good variety of herbs. Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.), Honeysuckle (*Lonicera periclymenum*) and Bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*) occur, with Enchanters'-nightshade (*Circaea lutetiana*), Wood Speedwell (*Veronica montana*), Bugle (*Ajuga reptans*), Golden-saxifrage (*Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*) and Remote Sedge (*Carex remota*), as well as a variety of more common species.

The wood is relatively rich in birdlife, having suitable conditions for high-forest species such as Chiff-chaff, Mistle Thrush and Great Tit. Scrub species such as Willow Warbler, Long Tailed Tit and Robin are also found here.

A surprising amount of deciduous woodland exists in the hilly countryside around Westport. This adds greatly to the scenic quality of the landscape. Ardogommon Wood is of particular interest as its woodland flora and fauna is better developed than in those woods nearer to Westport.

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