

COUNTY: AVON

SITE NAME: WESTON BIG WOOD

DISTRICT: WOODSPRING

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

Local Planning Authority: AVON COUNTY COUNCIL, Woodspring District Council

National Grid Reference: ST 455750

Area: 37.48 (ha.) 92.61 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 155

1:10,000: ST 47 NE, ST 47 SE

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1971

Date of Last Revision: 1974

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1984

Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:

Description:

Weston Big Wood is a fine example of mixed deciduous woodland, with a rich variety of plant species. It occupies largely uncultivable land in 2 parishes, and its shape, name, the heterogeneous structure of the oaks, the presence of ancient-woodland indicator species, together with historical records of the site, all suggest that it is the remnant of an ancient forest.

The site occupies the plateau and steeply sloping flanks or a narrow ridge of Carboniferous Limestone, and has well-drained soils of calcareous to mildly acidic clay loams, overlying a layer of limestone fragments.

The tree layer is dominated by Pedunculate Oak, which occurs as open-canopy mature standards, together with coppice and maiden Ash. There are discrete blocks containing abundant Wild Cherry, Wych Elm and Lime. Trees of particular interest include the ancient-woodland indicators Small-leaved Lime *Tilia cordata* and Wild Service Tree *Sorbus torminalis* both of which are locally abundant, the rare Whitebeams *Sorbus rupicola* and *S. eminens*, and a hybrid between Common Whitebeam and Wild Service *S. aria* × *torminalis*. The ground flora includes 2 colonies of the Red Data book species, Purple Gromwell *Buglossoides purpurocaerulea*.