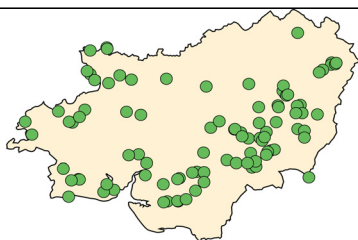


# CARMARTHENSHIRE LOCAL BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

## UPLAND MIXED ASHWOOD



Upland mixed ashwood



Distribution of records for upland mixed ashwood within Carmarthenshire. Data are summarised from Phase II surveys of Welsh woodlands.

### Conservation objectives

- \* Maintain the current extent of upland ashwood and improve its condition.
- \* Encourage the appropriate restoration of former upland ashwoods planted with non-native species.
- \* Encourage, on suitable sites, the expansion of upland ashwood

### What you can do to help:

- \* If you own this habitat – seek advice on management

### Further information:

[www.coedcymru.org.uk](http://www.coedcymru.org.uk)  
[www.forestry.gov.uk](http://www.forestry.gov.uk)

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## What is an upland mixed ashwood?

Upland mixed ashwoods usually grow on more fertile, damper and more lime-rich soils than oakwoods, generally in the north and west of Britain. They often grow along the streamsides/lower slopes within oakwoods but can be found as large woodlands, especially in Carboniferous Limestone areas. Sycamore is often common and you will find oak, wych elm, rowan, downy birch and yew in some woods. A number of rare plants grow in this habitat, as well as common species such as dog's mercury, enchanter's nightshade and wild garlic. Ashwoods can be rich in invertebrates and lichens. British upland ashwoods are of international importance for their distinctive plant and animal communities.

Some ashwoods have a long history of management for timber – ash had a wide range of traditional uses, and is one of the best firewoods. Upland mixed ashwoods have declined in both extent and condition over the last 70 years (see below), resulting in a decline in the woodland plants and lack of regeneration.

### Distribution in Carmarthenshire

Carmarthenshire has about 10% of the Welsh total of this habitat, the most important area lying on the narrow strip of carboniferous limestone in the south of the county. At least 8 SSSIs in Carmarthenshire include this habitat.

### What are the threats?

- \* Quarrying, particularly of limestone, has destroyed and continues to threaten some sites.
- \* Invasion by sycamore, beech and other species.
- \* Lack of management, such as hazel coppicing, leading to a reduction in structural diversity.
- \* Overgrazing resulting in a decline of the ground flora and lack of regeneration.
- \* Inappropriate management, e.g. replacement with conifers or inappropriate broadleaved species.
- \* Effects of air pollution especially on lichens.

### What is being done locally

- \* Woodland grants and agri-environment schemes, operate on sites with this habitat.
- \* Ecological surveys of upland mixed ashwoods have been undertaken.
- \* Coed Cymru provides free advice on the management of broad-leaved woodland.

### Where you can see this habitat

Carmel National Nature Reserve includes a particularly good example of upland mixed ashwood.