SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: DRUMBULCAUN BOG

SITE CODE: 000263

Drumbulcaun Bog is a small complex of raised bog, fen, open water and flooded grassland, situated about 7km south of Dunmore in Co. Galway. The site is surrounded by low limestone hills, and has one stream flowing from the west. The raised bog is unusual, showing evidence of mineral enrichment, probably due to flooding from mineral-rich groundwater during periods of high water-table each winter. In addition most of its surface has been damaged by fire.

A small unburned patch in the east of the site is intact and quaking. It has bushy clumps of Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*) on large loose hummocks of bog moss (*Sphagnum* spp.), with a variety of other mosses occurring, including *Aulacomnium palustre*. Cranberry (*Vaccinium oxycoccos*) is very abundant on the site and interestingly, Purple Moor-grass (*Molinia caerulea*) is widespread – in the fire-damaged part of the site this species is particularly abundant. The bog grades into a quaking fen in the north.

Four scarce plant species are found in the fen area on the northern side of the site – Marsh Fern (*Thelypteris palustris*), Bog-sedge (*Carex limosa*), Slender Sedge (*Carex lasiocarpa*) and Great Fen-sedge (*Cladium mariscus*). Large hummocks of the moss *Calliergonella cuspidata* and an almost complete cover of bog moss (*Sphagnum* spp.) characterise much of this fen. Vegetation with Crowberry (*Empetrum nigrum*) and Heather also occur in this fen area.

A small area of open water is fringed by Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*) and sedges (*Carex* spp.). Further west, fen grassland with Black Bog-rush (*Schoenus nigricans*) grades into wet flooded grassland and another area of permanent water. Both breeding and wintering birds use this area (60 Teal and many Moorhen were recorded on one visit in 1993).

Drumbulcaun Bog is of conservation significance for a variety of reasons – it is the only intact raised bog in the catchment of the Nanny River and it supports a variety of habitat types and a diversity of vegetation communities and species. The fen on the site is of particular interest, being at a late stage in the transition from fen to bog and including, as it does, an unusual vegetation community - Crowberry - Heather quaking swamp.

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