

**Site Name: Croaghonagh Bog SAC**

**Site Code: 000129**

Croaghonagh Bog is a small but quite intact blanket bog which occurs on the south-west shore of Lough Mourne, 17 km north-east of Donegal town. The site is underlain by metamorphosed sandstone and includes a good diversity of habitats including active bog, wet heath, lakeshore, streams and ditches, and some old cut-away bog.

The site is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) selected for the following habitats and/or species listed on Annex I / II of the E.U. Habitats Directive (\* = priority; numbers in brackets are Natura 2000 codes):

[7130] Blanket Bogs (Active)*
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Croaghonagh Bog displays some features of a raised bog and consists of a large, broad dome divided into two parts by dry, narrow channels, some of which contain swallow-holes. There is also a small lake in the middle of the site. The bog surface is spongy or quaking in localised areas, and contains a variety of features including widespread hummock/hollow communities and some large bog pools. There is an extensive cover of bog mosses (*Sphagnum* spp.), including several species of note such as *S. fuscum*, *S. imbricatum* and *S. magellanicum*. Other species recorded here include Bogbean (*Menyanthes trifoliata*), Great Sundew (*Drosera anglica*), Lesser Bladderwort (*Utricularia minor*) and Common Butterwort (*Pinguicula vulgaris*). Hummock vegetation includes Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*), Cross-leaved Heath (*Erica tetralix*), Hare's-tail Cottongrass (*Eriophorum vaginatum*) and *Cladonia* lichens.

Bird species recorded from the site include Greenland White-fronted Goose and Merlin, both of which are listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive, along with Red Grouse, Curlew and Kestrel. Deer, Otter and Hare also occur on the site.

The margins of the bog have been affected by turbary, particularly at the south and south-eastern sides, and there are indications that its surface is drying out in places. The hydrology of the bog may also be affected by water abstraction from Lough Mourne which is used as a reservoir for Donegal town.

Due to extensive afforestation, many bogs have been drained in this region and Croaghonagh Bog is one of only a handful of intact blanket bogs remaining in east Donegal. Apart from being an excellent example of this Annex I habitat type, the value of this site is increased by the range of wildlife species it supports, in particular the Annex I birds Greenland White-fronted Goose and Merlin.