

SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: KEELOGES BOG NHA

SITE CODE: 000281

Keeloges Bog NHA is located 5.5 km east of Glenamaddy mainly in the townlands Keeloges West, Keeloges East, Sonnagh East, Knockmascahill and Gortnadeeve West in County Galway. The site comprises a raised bog that includes both areas of high bog and cutover bog.

This site is made up of two areas of high bog that are bisected by a road. The eastern section of the site is dry due to a large number of major drains, the western section has an extensive area of hummocks and pools and is wet and quaking in areas. There is one flush in the west of the site. Coniferous forestry is found on three small sections of the high bog and associated cutover in the north, west and south-west of the site. Cutover is found all around the site.

This bog has been classified as a Western Raised Bog with Ling Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*), abundant Common Cottongrass (*Eriophorum angustifolium*), Carnation Sedge (*Carex panicea*) and the moss *Campylopus atrovirens*. In the middle of the western section of high bog stretching east towards the road there is a well developed system of hummocks and pools. The bog mosses *Sphagnum cuspidatum* and *S. auriculatum* are found in the pools as is Round-leaved Sundew (*Drosera rotundifolia*). The area between the pools are wet and quaking and Bog Asphodel (*Narthecium ossifragum*), White Beak-sedge (*Rhynchospora alba*) and Cottongrasses are common. The hummock forming bog mosses *Sphagnum capillifolium*, *S. papillosum* and *S. imbricatum* and the moss *Campylopus atrovirens* were also recorded between the pools. The south-west of the bog has a shallow peat layer and is dryer with Ling Heather dominant. The Purple Moor-grass (*Molinia caerulea*) dominated flush in the west of the site is drained by a channel. Soft Rush (*Juncus effusus*), Bottle Sedge (*Carex rostrata*), Bogbean (*Menyanthes trifoliata*), Marsh Violet (*Viola palustris*), Cranberry (*Vaccinium oxycoccos*) and the bog moss *Sphagnum recurvum* were recorded in the area of the channel. Coniferous forestry is found on three small sections of the high bog and associated cutover in the north, west and south-west of the site. Also in the south-west of the site there is a small area of Gorse (*Ulex* sp.) scrub on the high bog. In the north-east of the site there is an area of scrub on the cutover.

Current landuses on the site consist of peat-cutting, forestry and agriculture. Peat-cutting has occurred all around the site but active peat-cutting is now mostly in the north-east and south of the site. Since the 1970s conifers have been planted on three small sections of the high bog and cutover in the north, west and south-west of the site. The reclaiming of cutover for agriculture has occurred around the site. Damaging activities associated with these landuses include drainage throughout the site and extensive burning of the high bog. Old burning has been recorded in the north-west of the site. The majority of the eastern portion of the high bog has had

major drainage ditches dug through it in preparation for forestry that was never carried out. This was also the case in the west of the site where an area of high bog was damaged due to drainage operations in preparation for forestry. These activities listed have all resulted in the loss of habitat, damage to the hydrological status of the site, and pose a continuing threat to its viability.

Keeloges Bog NHA is a site of considerable conservation significance comprising as it does a raised bog, a rare habitat in the E.U. and one that is becoming increasingly scarce and under threat in Ireland. This site supports a good diversity of raised bog microhabitats, including hummocks and flushes. Ireland has a high proportion of the total E.U. resource of raised bog (over 50%) and so has a special responsibility for its conservation at an international level.