

SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: KILMORE BOG NHA

SITE CODE: 000283

Kilmore Bog NHA is located 5 km north-west of Ballygar, mainly in the townlands St. Brendans (Cregganagrogy), Slievemurry, Boggauns and Kilmore in Co. Galway. The site comprises a raised bog that includes both areas of high bog and cutover bog. The site is bounded in the south by a local road.

This is a medium sized bog with hummocks and pools and a central area that is wet and quaking. There is one large wooded flush in the east of the site. There is a small forestry plantation on cutover in the north of the site. Cutover is found all around the site.

Much of the high bog has vegetation typical of a Western Raised Bog, consisting of Ling Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*), Cottongrass (*Eriophorum* sp.), Deergrass (*Scirpus cespitosus*), Carnation Sedge (*Carex panicea*), the moss *Campylopus atrovirens* and the liverwort *Pleurozia purpurea*. There is an area of hummocks and pools in the south and south-west of the site. The bog mosses *Sphagnum capillifolium*, *S. magellanicum*, *S. imbricatum* and *S. fuscum* have all been recorded in this area of the site. The frequent pools seen in this area of the bog are narrow and contain the bog moss *S. cuspidatum* with Bogbean (*Menyanthes trifoliata*). Common Cottongrass (*Eriophorum angustifolium*) and Great Sundew (*Drosera anglica*). White Beak-sedge (*Rhynchospora alba*) and the liverwort *Pleurozia purpurea* are found along the margins of the pools. North of the pools there is some evidence of burning with Bog Asphodel (*Narthecium ossifragum*), Deergrass, Ling Heather, Common Cottongrass, and Cross-leaved Heath (*Erica tetralix*) recorded. There are tear pools in this area and the bog mosses *S. cuspidatum* and *S. auriculatum* have been recorded with Brown Beak-sedge (*Rhynchospora fusca*) and Great Sundew. As the ground slopes down to the flush the pools increase in size and Oblong-leaved Sundew (*Drosera intermedia*) is found.

The east of the site is dominated by a wooded flush with Downy Birch (*Betula pubescens*), Eared Willow (*Salix aurita*) and occasional Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) with Bilberry (*Vaccinium myrtillus*) and Blackberry (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.) in the under-storey. The diversity of the epiphytic lichen flora on the birch trees in the flush is high with the genera *Parmelia*, *Pertusaria*, *Evernia* and *Usnea* all recorded. The hummocks are dominated by the bog mosses *S. capillifolium*, *S. squarrosum* and *S. papillosum*. The depression which leads into the flush has fen type vegetation and is composed of several small streams which run between floating mats of the bog mosses *S. papillosum* and *S. subnitens*. Bog Pondweed (*Potamogeton polygonifolius*), Water Horetail (*Equisetum fluviatile*), Bulrush (*Typha latifolia*) and Lesser Bladderwort (*Utricularia minor*) are in the channels.

Cutover in the north of the site contains a failed conifer plantation with willow (*Salix* sp.) and Bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*) in between the mature conifers. This plantation is set in a flooded grassland with Floating Sweet-grass (*Glyceria fluitans*) dominant. In the north-east of the site there are some semi-improved fields on the cutover. In the east of the site there is a large area of cutover with scrub growing on it.

The rare bird species Red Grouse has been recorded at the site.

Current landuses on the site include forestry, peat-cutting and agriculture. The forestry is found on cutover in the north of the site. Active peat-cutting is taking place in the north and south of the site. Two fields on the cutover in the north-east of the site are semi-improved. Damaging activities associated with these landuses include drainage throughout the site and burning of the high bog. There is also evidence of old burning in the north-west and south-east of the site. All these activities have resulted in the loss of habitat and damage to the hydrological status of the site, and pose a continuing threat to its viability.

Kilmore 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, pools and a flush. 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.