

SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: KILNABORRIS BOG NHA

SITE CODE: 000284

Kilnaborris Bog is situated 6 km west of Eyrecourt, Co. Galway. It is located mainly in the townlands of Killnaborris, Killeragh and Cankilly. The site comprises a raised bog that includes both areas of high bog and cutover bog.

The site consists of one raised bog dome. The central area has a number of degraded pools, which have become infilled. There are more pools north of the bog centre and a flush in the centre of the bog, both of these features appears to be associated with a bog burst. Aligned tear pools and steep slopes associated with the bog burst are located to the south of the site.

Much of the high bog has vegetation typical of for both western and midlands raised bog types, consisting of Ling Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*), Hare's-tails Cottongrass (*Eriophorum vaginatum*), Bog Asphodel (*Narthecium ossifragum*) and bog moss *Sphagnum magellanicum*. Most of the other species are found in localised patches. The bog moss *Sphagnum auriculatum* is found in several large hollows. Other pools are filled with bog moss (*Sphagnum cuspidatum*) along with Bogbean (*Menyanthes trifoliata*) and Long-leaved Sundew (*Drosera anglica*). The bryophytes *Sphagnum fuscum*, *Dicrananum scoparium* and *Pleurozia schreberi* as well as Ling Heather, Downy Birch (*Betula pubescens*), Soft Rush (*Juncus effusus*), Bog-rosemary (*Andromeda polifolia*) and Cranberry (*Vaccinium oxycoccos*) are found in the centre flush. There are extensive lawns of bog moss (*Sphagnum capillifolium*, *S. papillosum* and *S. magellanicum*) in the central area of the high bog. Scots Pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) can be found growing on dryer areas of the bog in areas where the drainage has been affected by the old bog burst. Ling Heather is found on steep slopes and on the cutaway. The club moss *Huperzia selago* is scattered throughout the bog vegetation.

Current landuse on the site consists of peat cutting, which is now mainly confined to the western margin. Peat cutting and burning have led to the drying out of the bog surface. Peat cutting was the probable cause of a major bog burst pre-1973. There is some evidence that the bog burst has caused considerable drying out of the bog surface. Bog bursts are relatively infrequent occurrences on a raised bog. Scots Pine is becoming established on dryer areas of the bog and on steep banks.

Kilnaborris 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 diversity of raised bog microhabitats including hummock/hollow complexes, pools, a flush and scrub on the old peat cuttings. Ireland has a high proportion of the E.U. resource of raised bog (over 50%) and so has a special responsibility for its conservation at an international level.

18.11.2002