

## SITE SYNOPSIS

**SITE NAME: LOUGH TEE BOG NHA**

**SITE CODE: 000307**

Lough Tee Bog NHA is located 6 km east of Monivea mainly in the townlands Cuddoo East, Derrough, Cormacuagh East, Shanballymore, Ballyglass and Cloonkeenkerrill. The site comprises a raised bog that includes both areas of high bog and cutover bog.

This is a large site that is partially divided by tracks and associated drains that run across the eastern section of high bog. In this area of the bog there is also a small ring fort. There are five small lakes included in the site, Lough Corneal in the north, and in the south, Lough Tee, Lough Doo, Shanballymore Lough and an unnamed small lake. There is an area of hummocks and pools in the north-east of the high bog and a section at the centre of this area is wet and quaking. There are four flushes in this site, three in the south and one at the centre of the site. Coniferous forestry is located on two small areas of the high bog in the east and north-east of the site. Forestry is also on the cutover adjoining these areas and a separate section of cutover in the north-east of the site. Cutover is found around most of the high bog and across the centre of the eastern half of the site.

Much of the high bog has vegetation typical of a Western Raised Bog, consisting of Ling Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*), Cottongrass (*Eriophorum* sp.), Carnation Sedge (*Carex panicea*), the liverwort *Pleurozia purpurea* and the moss *Campylopus atrovirens*. The hummock-forming bog mosses *Sphagnum fuscum* and *S. imbricatum* have been recorded on the high bog. The centre of the eastern lobe of the bog has a large area of hummocks and pools. The bog mosses *Sphagnum cuspidatum* and *S. auriculatum* are found in the pools. Brown Beak-sedge (*Rhynchospora fusca*) grows in some of the pools and the liverwort *Pleurozia purpurea* is abundant at the edges of the pools. Around this wet centre there are large areas of Deergrass (*Scirpus cespitosus*) and Bog Asphodel (*Narthecium ossifragum*). Further west towards the centre of the bog there is a second wetter area of hummocks and pools which is dominated by Cottongrass, Carnation Sedge and Bog Asphodel. The bog moss *S. cuspidatum* is found in the pools and there are lawns of *S. magellanicum*. There are four flushes in the site. One is found around Lough Doo and birch (*Betula* sp.), Purple Moor-grass (*Molinia caerulea*) and Bog-myrtle (*Myrica gale*) occur in the flush area. Of the other two flushes in the south the south-eastern flush is atypical of a bog flush. Species recorded here include the mosses *Campylium stellatum* and *Fissidens* sp. and Heath Wood-rush (*Luzula multiflora*). The fourth flush in the north-west of the site has Purple Moor-grass, Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*), and Soft Reed (*Juncus effusus*). There are five lakes in the site. The largest is Lough Corneal in the north of the site, which is notable due to its steep edges dominated by Ling Heather. Lough Tee, with Bogbean (*Menyanthes trifoliata*), Broad-leaved Pondweed (*Potamogeton natans*) and Yellow Water-lily (*Nuphar lutea*) is the next largest lake. To the north-east of Lough Tee there is an associated small area of woodland with birch, Hazel (*Corylus avellana*), willow (*Salix* sp.) and oak (*Quercus*

sp.). Of the other three lakes in the south of the site Lough Doo is almost completely infilled and dominated by Ling Heather and Purple Moor-grass, and Shanballymere Lough has Bulrush (*Typha latifolia*) and Common Reed growing around it. The third lake in the south-west is surrounded by Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), birch, Purple Moor-grass and Soft Rush. There is coniferous forestry on two small areas of the high bog in the east and north-east of the site. Forestry is also on the cutover adjoining these two areas and on a separate section of cutover in the north-east of the site. Regenerating cutover occurs in the south-east of the site and it supports vegetation of Ling Heather, Purple Moor-grass and bog mosses; *Sphagnum cuspidatum* lawns occur in the wetter areas. Birch scrub occurs on old cutover in the south-east and the cutover in the far east of the site consists of lowland wet grassland with many sedge (*Carex* sp.) species noted.

Golden Plover, a species that is listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive, and Otter, a Red Data Book species have been recorded at the site.

Current landuses on the site include forestry, peat-cutting and agriculture. Forestry is found on the high bog and cutover in the north-east and east of the site. Peat-cutting has occurred around most of the site and also across the middle of some of the site. Mechanised active peat-cutting is most extensive in the south-east of the site. The most improved reclaimed agricultural fields are south of the eastern lobe of high bog. Damaging activities associated with these landuses include drainage throughout the site and burning of the high bog. There are old drains along the tracks in the centre of the site that will have a damaging effect. There has also been a new drain dug in the centre of the site and two new drain complexes in the south of the site. There has also been some recent burning in the south 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.

Lough Tee 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. The site supports a good diversity of raised bog microhabitats, including hummocks, pools and flushes. The presence of five lakes at the site adds to its diversity. 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.