

Site Name: Cloughmoyne SAC

Site Code: 000479

Cloughmoyne is located approximately 5 km north-west of Headford in Co. Mayo. The site lies on the south-west slope of a low limestone ridge and spreads southwards to include a fen and lake. The site is situated in the townland of Ballisnahyny (just west of the Cloughmoyne townland).

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):

[8240] Limestone Pavement*

The site includes areas of species-rich dry grassland, where the following species are common: Blue Moor-grass (*Sesleria albicans*), Sweet Vernal-grass (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*), Red Fescue (*Festuca rubra*), Common Bird's-foot-trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*), Mouse-ear Hawkweed (*Hieracium pilosella*), Kidney Vetch (*Anthyllis vulneraria*), White Clover (*Trifolium repens*) and Red Clover (*Trifolium pratense*). Also found are Bloody Cranesbill (*Geranium sanguineum*), Columbine (*Aquilegia vulgaris*), Juniper (*Juniperus communis*), Madder (*Rubia peregrina*), the scarce Dense-flowered Orchid (*Neotinea maculata*), Spring Gentian (*Gentiana verna*) and the rare and legally protected (Flora (Protection) Order, 1999) species, Wood Bitter-vetch (*Vicia orobus*).

The site also includes some species-poor fen vegetation, dominated by Black Bog-rush (*Schoenus nigricans*), with Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*) and Great Fensedge (*Cladium mariscus*) occurring occasionally. Other species found in this fen vegetation include Wild Angelica (*Angelica sylvestris*), Cuckooflower (*Cardamine pratensis*), Devil's-bit Scabious (*Succisa pratensis*), Marsh Pennywort (*Hydrocotyle vulgaris*), Bogbean (*Menyanthes trifoliata*), Long-stalked Yellow-sedge (*Carex lepidocarpa*), Common Cottongrass (*Eriophorum angustifolium*), Common Butterwort (*Pinguicula vulgaris*) and the bryophytes *Scorpidium scorpioides* and *Campylium stellatum*.

The site also includes some 40 ha of good quality limestone pavement of the 'shattered' form. Limestone pavement is an important habitat that is listed, with priority status, on Annex I of the E.U. Habitats Directive. At this site the limestone pavement supports a typical flora and is associated with areas of species-rich calcareous grassland and heath. Of particular note is the presence of the very rare and legally protected (Flora (Protection) Order, 1999) species Limestone Fern (*Gymnocarpium robertianum*).

The Common Frog, a species listed in the Red Data Book, breeds within the site.

Agricultural activities, in particular reclamation of limestone pavement and fertilization, within and adjacent to the site pose the main threats to the survival of the site and its rare species.

Cloughmoyne is of considerable conservation significance for its good quality limestone pavement, a rare and threatened habitat, and for the presence of two rare plant species.