



Site Name: Kilglassan/Caheravoostia Turlough Complex SAC

Site Code: 000504

This site is situated about 7 km east of Ballinrobe in Co. Mayo. It comprises two turloughs separated by a rise of land which includes a pond and a small floating fen. The surrounding topography is gently rolling, with limestone outcrop at the northern end of Kilglassan. Both turloughs occupy relatively flat basins that remain wet even in summer and have accumulated peat. Peat depth is up to 2 m at one point in the southern section of Kilglassan and has not been cut for over 20 years.

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):

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| [3180] Turloughs* |
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The large size of this site allows good development of the wetter turlough vegetation types. There are substantial areas of Amphibious Bistort (*Polygonum amphibium*) and Common Sedge (*Carex nigra*) at lower levels, with some Canary Reed-grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*), Bladder Sedge (*Carex vesicaria*) and Bogbean (*Menyanthes trifoliata*). Purple Moor-grass (*Molinia caerulea*) and Marsh Pennywort (*Hydrocotyle vulgaris*) are frequent on the peat surfaces, while Carnation Sedge (*Carex panicea*), Northern Bedstraw (*Galium boreale*) and a little Mat-grass (*Nardus stricta*) occupy the shallow soils on the sides of the basin. Several ponds occur where Great Yellow-cress (*Rorippa amphibia*), Unbranched Bur-reed (*Sparganium emersum*) and Hemlock Water-dropwort (*Oenanthe aquatica*) are characteristic.

At Caheravoostia there is some Tubular Water-dropwort (*Oenanthe fistulosa*) present, an unusual plant for a turlough, and scarce west of the River Shannon. The high level pond between the two basins provides a good contrast of vegetation, with species such as Lesser Tussock-sedge (*Carex diandra*), Knotted Pearlwort (*Sagina nodosa*) and Small Sweet-grass (*Glyceria declinata*).

Other habitats which are included in the site are wet and dry grassland, and some improved grassland at the southern section of Kilglassan. These grasslands may flood at times of high water. Some scrub occurs at the margins of Kilglassan.

The wetness of the site and the lack of grazing in the central parts provides good habitat for breeding waders, with several pairs each of Lapwing, Snipe and Redshank present in 1990. The site is likely to attract wintering waterfowl but no data are available.

The turloughs lie only 1 km from the (drained) River Robe and their flooding pattern seems likely to have been affected to some degree by this drainage. There is no internal drainage apart from some ditches marking boundaries. Grazing occurs in both basins and some agricultural improvements have taken place around the margins of the site.

This site is of interest as it is a relatively large turlough complex with considerable habitat diversity. The extensive area of wetland vegetation that occurs in the turlough basins is notable.