

Site Name: Derrinea Bog SAC

Site Code: 000604

Derrinea Bog is a small raised bog site in Co. Roscommon. It is situated on the northern margin of Cloonagh Lough, just east of the Mayo/Roscommon border and approximately 10 km north-west of Ballyhaunis. A river emanating from Cloonagh Lough forms the eastern and northern boundary of the site. The site is an example of a western raised bog.

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):

[7110] Raised Bog (Active)*
[7120] Degraded Raised Bog
[7150] Rhynchosporion Vegetation

Active raised bog comprises areas of high bog that are wet and actively peat-forming, where the percentage cover of bog mosses (*Sphagnum* spp.) is high, and where some or all of the following features occur: hummocks, pools, wet flats, *Sphagnum* lawns, flushes and soaks. Degraded raised bog corresponds to those areas of high bog whose hydrology has been adversely affected by peat cutting, drainage and other land use activities, but which are capable of regeneration. The Rhynchosporion habitat occurs in wet depressions, pool edges and erosion channels where the vegetation includes White Beak-sedge (*Rhynchospora alba*) and/or Brown Beak-sedge (*R. fusca*), and at least some of the following associated species, Bog Asphodel (*Narthecium ossifragum*), sundews (*Drosera* spp.), Deergrass (*Scirpus cespitosus*) and Carnation Sedge (*Carex panicea*).

The majority of the uncut high bog dome at this site comprises degraded raised bog. There is, however, a central active portion which features an extensive area of pools, quaking flats and well-developed hummocks. Areas of Rhynchosporion vegetation are largely confined to this central active area. The pools are generally dominated by the bog moss *S. cuspidatum*, which is usually accompanied by *S. auriculatum*, White Beak-sedge, Bogbean (*Menyanthes trifoliata*), Common Cottongrass (*Eriophorum angustifolium*) and Bog-sedge (*Carex limosa*). The site supports two large pools (15 to 25 m in diameter) and these are infilling with rafts of Rhynchosporion vegetation. Surrounding the pools, quaking flats have good bog moss cover, with the moss *Campylopus atrovirens* and Great Sundew (*Drosera anglica*) also present. The hummock-forming bog moss *S. imbricatum* is found around the pools. The scarce *Sphagnum recurvum* var. *tenu*e has been recorded from the site. Other species which

occur on the hummocks include Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*) and Cross-leaved Heath (*Erica tetralix*).

The vegetation of the degraded bog areas tends to be species-poor and dominated by robust plant species such as Carnation Sedge, Heather, Deergrass and Bog Asphodel. The *Sphagnum* cover is usually less than 30% and pools are rare. Locally, in areas where there are pronounced surface slopes, there are erosion channels dominated by White Beak-sedge.

A small area of heath, developed over a till mound, occurs at the southern end of the bog and this adds to the ecological interest of the site. It has an almost complete cover of Heather, with occasional Sessile Oak (*Quercus petraea*).

Whilst much of the high bog surface at this site is partially degraded due to drainage and turf cutting, the active bog is still remarkably wet and of good quality. Continued peat cutting will cause further degradation to the raised bog habitats.

Derrinea Bog is a site of high conservation importance as it contains examples of the Annex I habitats active raised bog, degraded raised bog and depressions on peat substrates (Rhynchosporion). The site is an example of a western raised bog and although it is rather small, the quality of the habitats is generally good. A number of other raised bogs and calcareous lakes lie in close proximity to this site and together they constitute one of the most important ecological areas in the east Mayo/Roscommon region.