



Site Name: Turloughmore (Sligo) SAC

Site Code: 000637

Turloughmore occupies a hollow in the drift-covered ridges north-east of Tobercurry in Co. Sligo. It is less calcareous than most turloughs and is also relatively free-draining, resulting in the fact that there are no long-lasting pools left when groundwater levels subside. The reason for this seems to be the sandy glacial drift which fills the basin. This is derived from the acidic rocks to the north, rather than the limestones to the south-east. The drift gives a smooth outline to the turlough and there is only a single small outcrop of rock. A raised bog encroaches from the east, which creates an unusual zonation on this side. Pasture, some of which floods at times of very high water levels, surrounds the remainder of the turlough.

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):

[3180] Turloughs*

The turlough consists of two parts, separated by a slight ridge. The vegetation of both basins is a predominantly dry grass and sedge community. Species present on the floor include a range of sedges (*Carex nigra*, *C. hirta* and scattered *C. disticha*), with Tall Fescue (*Festuca arundinacea*), Reed Canary-grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*) and Marsh Ragwort (*Senecio aquaticus*). Above this level, there is an extensive area of slightly leached heath-type vegetation, with Mat-grass (*Nardus stricta*), Tufted Hair-grass (*Deschampsia cespitosa*) and Carnation Sedge (*Carex panicea*). Tormentil (*Potentilla erecta*) is abundant, and a little Creeping Cinquefoil (*P. reptans*) is present, with lady's-mantle (*Alchemilla* sp.), Common Spotted-orchid (*Dactylorhiza fuchsii*) and, on the eastern side below the bog, Sneezewort (*Achillea ptarmica*), the eyebright *Euphrasia arctica* and Heath Rush (*Juncus squarrosus*). Above this zone there is often a band of Purple Moor-grass (*Molinia caerulea*), rushes (*Juncus effusus* and *J. conglomeratus*), Devil's-bit Scabious (*Succisa pratensis*) and Sweet Vernal-grass (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*).

The site is visited occasionally by small numbers of Whooper Swan, a species listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive.

The turlough has a regular flooding pattern in winter and appears to be unaffected by local or regional drainage. The more oligotrophic communities at this site would be threatened by agricultural improvement to the areas around the turlough. Grazing pressure around the turlough is mostly fairly high and this prevents scrub

and woodland from becoming established. Part of the floor of the basin is grazed by horses.

Turloughmore is important for being the most northern turlough in the country. It is of ecological interest also for its relatively oligotrophic nature, and has a good representation of the associated vegetation types.