

**Site Name: Deputy's Pass Nature Reserve SAC**

**Site Code: 000717**

Deputy's Pass woodland is located on the northern spur of the Deputy's Pass near Glenealy in Co. Wicklow. It was designated a Nature Reserve in 1982.

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):

[91A0] Old Oak Woodlands
--------------------------

The predominant vegetation community in Deputy's Pass Nature Reserve is Sessile Oak (*Quercus petraea*) woodland, referable to the Blechno-Quercetum petraeae association. The oak is of coppice origin, 70-80 years old, and forms a nearly closed canopy. Other tree species present are Rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*), Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), and Downy Birch (*Betula pubescens*), occurring mainly at the edges. In some areas Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) also occurs. The understorey is formed of oak saplings, Holly and Hazel (*Corylus avellana*), while the ground flora of the wood is dominated by Great Wood-rush (*Luzula sylvatica*), Bilberry (*Vaccinium myrtillus*), Hard Fern (*Blechnum spicant*), and Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.). Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*) and Bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*) are abundant in some areas. In some parts, Bluebells (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*), Male Fern (*Dryopteris filix-mas*), Hay-scented Buckler-fern (*D. aemula*), Sanicle (*Sanicula europea*) and Wood-sorrel (*Oxalis acetosella*) occur commonly.

The regeneration of native trees and the good ground cover indicate an absence of grazing; there are no sheep in the site and deer very seldom occur.

Less than 10% of the site is occupied by conifers. Where they are present they consist of 20-30 years old plantations of Douglas Fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), Sitka Spruce (*Picea sitchensis*), Norway Spruce (*P. abies*), European Larch (*Larix decidua*) and Scots Pine (*Pinus sylvestris*). Once mature these small stands will be removed, to allow native species to naturally replace them.

The site supports breeding populations of the Smooth Newt (*Triturus vulgaris*) and the Common Frog (*Rana temporaria*), amphibians protected by the Wildlife Act, 1976.

Deputy's Pass is managed as a Nature Reserve and is part of an internationally important series of oak woods in Co. Wicklow which are almost certainly natural in origin and which retain much of their original character and species composition (other examples include Glendalough, Clara Vale and Ballinacor).