

Site Name: Mucksna Wood SAC

Site Code: 001371

Mucksna Wood is located south of Kenmare on the shores of the Kenmare River, Co. Kerry. It is a well established mixed woodland, containing both native and exotic tree species, with some regeneration occurring. The soil is quite rich and probably of glacial drift origin. The northern margin of the woodland borders onto a narrow fringe of saltmarsh beside the Kenmare River.

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

At Mucksna Wood, approximately 40-50% of the woodland area is dominated by oak. This is mostly Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*), but there is also some Sessile Oak (*Q. petraea*). There is a large variety of other tree species present also, including Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*), Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), fir (*Abies* sp.) and Scots Pine (*Pinus sylvestris*). Occasional elm (*Ulmus* sp.) and Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) are also found. Some of the oaks and conifers are very large (up to 35 m tall). Hazel (*Corylus avellana*), Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) and Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) are common in the understorey.

The soil shows considerable variation, including shallow rocky facies, deeper and more fertile facies, and wet and waterlogged facies. There is a rich and diverse ground flora which includes Pignut (*Conopodium majus*), Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*), Bugle (*Ajuga reptans*), Lesser Celandine (*Ranunculus ficaria*), Enchanter's-nightshade (*Circaea lutetiana*), False Brome (*Brachypodium sylvaticum*), Wood Anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*), Primrose (*Primula vulgaris*), Wood Speedwell (*Veronica montana*), violets (*Viola* spp.), Wood-sedge (*Carex sylvatica*) and Irish Spurge (*Euphorbia hyberna*). In flushed areas and seepage zones under stands of Ash and Alder species such as Golden Saxifrage (*Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*), Remote Sedge (*Carex remota*) and Sanicle (*Sanicula europaea*) are found. Bilberry (*Vaccinium myrtillus*), Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*), Bell Heather (*Erica cinerea*), Hard Fern (*Blechnum spicant*) and Wood-sorrel (*Oxalis acetosella*) occur on more acidic soils. The moist conditions provide ideal conditions for ferns, e.g. Lady-fern (*Athyrium filix-femina*), Scaly Male-fern (*Dryopteris affinis*), Broad Buckler-fern (*D. dilatata*), Hay-scented Buckler-fern (*D. aemula*) and Tunbridge Filmy-fern (*Hymenophyllum tunbridgense*), as well as mosses, e.g. *Plagiomnium undulatum*, *Mnium hornum*, *Hookeria lucens* and *Hylocomium brevirostre*. St Patrick's-cabbage (*Saxifraga spathularis*) occurs on large boulders.

The wood is used by a variety of birds and contains an important Heronry.

The site is of particular conservation significance for its well-developed oak woodland, a habitat listed on Annex I of the E.U. Habitats Directive.