

## SITE SYNOPSIS

**SITE NAME: CASHEL BOG (LEITRIM) NHA**

**SITE CODE: 001405**

Cashel Bog is one of a cluster of bogs that is situated mainly in the townlands of Corracramph South, Cashel and Clooneagh, 5 km east of Dromod, Co. Leitrim. The site lies halfway between Lough Bofin and Lough Rinn, and the River Shannon is about 7 km due south. This is a small bog, situated between drumlins and surrounded by agricultural land Corracramph Bog NHA lies adjacent to the west of the site.

Most of the bog surface is wet and there is good pool development in places. A small area of wet scrub occurs to the south and west of the site. Old abandoned cutaway is found to the east.

Most of the bog has vegetation typical of Midland Raised Bog type with Ling Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*), and Cotton grass (*Eriophorum angustifolium*). Other species present include Bog-rosemary (*Andromeda polifolia*), White Beak-sedge (*Rhynchospora alba*) and Deergrass (*Scirpus cespitosus*). The central area is very wet and quaking in places and there is an interlocking pool system and (Rhynchosporiaon) hollows. The scarce Brown Beak-sedge (*Rhynchospora fusca*) occurs around pool edges. Overall, Bog Moss (*Sphagnum* spp.) cover is high, with abundant *S. capillifolium* forming lawns in places and many *Sphagnum* filled pools. The eastern edge is slightly drier with Ling Heather dominant. The western side has been cut and there are flushed areas with Hard Rush (*Juncus effusus*), the moss *Polytricum commune* and Bog Myrtle (*Myrica gale*). Elsewhere to the west, the high bog has been damaged by burning with Bog Asphodel (*Narthecium ossifragum*) and Deergrass now dominating.

Old cutover to the east of the site is dominated in places by Purple Moor-grass (*Molinia caerulea*) and Ling Heather, Bog Asphodel (*Narthecium ossifragum*) and Hard Rush (*Juncus effusus*). Bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*) and Common Bent (*Agrostis capillaris*) are also present. Elsewhere, *Sphagnum* pools occur. To the south a small area of wet scrub woodland with Willow (*Salix* spp.) and occasional Ash (*Fraxinum excelsior*) occurs. An area of Downy Birch (*Betula pubescens*) scrub with Blackberry (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.) and Purple Moor-grass is found along the western bog margin.

Red Grouse, a species that is becoming increasingly rare in Ireland has been recorded on the site. Greenland White-fronted Geese are known to use the site for refuge and foraging.

Current landuse on the site consists of mechanical peat-cutting along the northern and southern margins. Some reclamation has occurred around the bog margins. Domestic dumping occurs on the site. Damaging activities associated with these landuses include drainage and burning. Some areas to the west and east have been burnt in the

recent past, but there is evidence of good recovery. These are all activities that have resulted in loss of habitat and damage to the hydrological status of the site, and pose a continuing threat to its viability.

Cashel Bog NHA is a site of considerable conservation significance comprising as it does a raised bog, a rare habitat in the E.U. and one that is becoming increasingly scarce and under threat in Ireland. This high bog supports a good diversity of raised bog microhabitats including some hummock/hollow complexes and interlocking pools. The use of the site by Greenland White-fronted Geese adds further interest. Ireland has a high proportion of the total E.U. resource of raised bog (over 50%) and so has a special responsibility for its conservation at an international level.

15.11.2002