

SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: CLOONAGEEHER BOG NHA

SITE CODE: 001423

Cloonageeher Bog NHA is situated approximately 6 km north of Newtown Forbes, mainly in the townlands of Cloonageeher and Cloontubbrid, on the border between Counties Longford and Leitrim. The site comprises a raised bog that includes both areas of high bog and cutover bog, and is one of the most northern remaining raised bogs in Ireland.

Cloonageeher Bog consists of one main lobe of high bog, but this has been somewhat dissected by a number of old tracks. There are wet areas on the high bog which consist of flushes and a small area with pools and hummock/hollow systems at the south-west of the site. A mineral ridge protrudes into the site at the north. Active peat-cutting is carried out around much of the site, but mainly at the south and north.

The high bog at Cloonageeher possesses many of the species typical of raised bogs in Ireland, such as Cross-leaved Heath (*Erica tetralix*), Bog Asphodel (*Narthecium ossifragum*) and bog mosses (*Sphagnum* spp.). At the south-west of the site there is a small pool and hummock complex. Apart from this, pools are scarce and algal hollows become more common. There is a predominance of low bog moss hummocks (mainly *Sphagnum subnitens* and *S. tenellum*) and typical fire-damaged vegetation. There are also a number of flushed areas on the bog. At the centre of the bog there is a large flush which is dominated by Purple Moor-grass (*Molinia caerulea*) and has been seriously damaged by fire. To the north-west there is a wet and somewhat quaking flush, dominated by Bog-myrtle (*Myrica gale*). Bog Asphodel is common in this area, along with Cross-leaved Heath and Deergrass (*Scirpus cespitosus*) and there are hummocks of *S. subnitens*, *S. papillosum* and *S. imbricatum*.

Current landuse on the site consists of peat-cutting mainly along the northern and southern margins of the high bog, and the drainage associated with this. Large portions of the bog have been burned in the past and areas of cutover bog have been reclaimed for agricultural purposes. These activities have resulted in loss of habitat and damage to the hydrological status of the site, and pose a continuing threat to its viability.

Cloonageeher 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. 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.

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