

**Site Name: Knockalongy and Knockachree Cliffs SAC**

**Site Code: 001669**

Knockalongy and Knockachree Cliffs SAC is situated at the north-eastern end of the Ox Mountains range, between 3 and 6 km south of the village of Skreen in Co. Sligo. It consists of two areas of steeply sloping ground with an abundance of outcropping acid rocks of gneiss and granite, with two loughs (Lough Achree and Lough Minnaun) situated at the base of these cliffs. There are few cliffs in the Ox Mountains and the two areas incorporated within this site provide one of the few habitats for alpine plants in this part of the county. The cliffs range in altitude from approximately 100 to 300 m above sea level.

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):

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| [1421] Killarney Fern ( <i>Trichomanes speciosum</i> ) |
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The cliffs at this site support a range of montane plant communities, and several notable species occur. Species recorded from these cliffs include Yellow Saxifrage (*Saxifraga aizoides*), a species listed in the Red Data Book, Beech Fern (*Phegopteris connectilis*), Stone Bramble (*Rubus saxatilis*), Cowberry (*Vaccinium vitis-idaea*), Lesser Clubmoss (*Selaginella selaginoides*), Wilson's Filmy-fern (*Hymenophyllum wilsonii*), Marsh Hawk's-beard (*Crepis paludosa*) and Pale Sedge (*Carex pallescens*), amongst others.

Of particular note is the presence in the site of Killarney Fern (*Trichomanes speciosum*), a rare species that is listed on Annex II of the E.U. Habitats Directive and protected under the Flora (Protection) Order, 1999.

Vascular plant species recorded from the lakes on the site include Bottle Sedge (*Carex rostrata*), Water Lobelia (*Lobelia dortmanna*) and Soft Rush (*Juncus effusus*). Bird Cherry (*Prunus padus*), a rare species listed in the Red Data Book, has been recorded from by Lough Achree.

The site is used as an alternative nesting site by a pair of Peregrine Falcon, a species listed in the E.U. Birds Directive.

The site is of considerable conservation significance for the montane plant communities it supports, for the presence of Red Data Book plant species and, in particular, for the presence of a population of the rare, E.U. Habitats Directive Annex II species, Killarney Fern.