

## SITE SYNOPSIS

**SITE NAME: NORE VALLEY BOGS NHA**

**SITE CODE: 001853**

Nore Valley Bogs NHA is situated in the Nore Valley approximately 8 km south-east of Roscrea, in the townlands of Timoney, Cappalahan, and Bawnmadrum North, Co. Tipperary. The site consists of an area of raised bog, including areas of high bog and cutover, divided in two by a road and adjoining the channelled River Nore. The dome of the western high bog features a pool/hummock complex and some flush systems. Cutover is found all around the margins and active peat cutting occurs on the east, north-east, north and north-west margins. There is also a stand of woodland on the boundary with the River Nore.

The high bog has vegetation typical of a Midland Raised Bog. Bog Asphodel (*Narthecium ossifragum*), White Beak-sedge (*Rhynchospora alba*), Cottongrass (*Eriophorum angustifolium* and *Eriophorum vaginatum*) are the dominant plants, with Ling Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*), Deergrass (*Scirpus cespitosus*), occasional Bog-rosemary (*Andromeda polifolia*) and Cranberry (*Vaccinium oxycoccos*) also present. The pool/hummock complex vegetation consists of Cottongrass, Ling Heather and bog mosses (*Sphagnum capillifolium*, *S. magellanicum* and *S. papillosum*). The pools contain the bog moss *Sphagnum cuspidatum* and are infilling with Cottongrass. Bog-rosemary and Cranberry are found growing on hummocks here.

There are three flushes on the bog, two of which supports Scots Pine (*Pinus sylvestris*). The understorey is mainly Downey Birch (*Betula pubescens*), while the ground flora is dominated by Ling Heather, Cranberry, Bog-rosemary, Bilberry (*Vaccinium myrtillus*) and a range of mosses. The third flush is located on the southern margin of the bog and is dominated by Bog-myrtle (*Myrica gale*) with Purple Moor-grass (*Molinia caerulea*). The active cutover is mainly bare peat, while old cutaway is dominated by Purple Moor-grass with Gorse (*Ulex europaeus*) scrub. Areas of woodland fringe the river on the northern bank. There are also small areas of scrub and woodland to the south and the west of the site.

Hen Harrier, Hare, Badger and Otter, which are all listed as Red Data Book species have been recorded for this site.

There is extensive commercial peat cutting to the east and north-west of this site and numerous drains extend into the bog and its surrounding cutaway. Burning has recently damaged the bog and the surface is hard in places. There is a small stand of Sitka Spruce (*Picea sitchensis*) on the north-east of the site and some agricultural reclamation of cutaway in the south-west. 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.

Nore Valley Bogs 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 site supports a good diversity of raised bog microhabitats, including hummock/hollow complexes, pools and flushes, as well as a number of scarce plant species. Ireland has a high proportion of the total E.U. resource of this habitat type (over 50%) and so has a special responsibility for its conservation at an international level.

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