



Site Name: Cloonakillina Lough SAC

Site Code: 001899

Cloonakillina is a medium sized lake located in Co. Roscommon, 10 km south-east of Tobercurry which is in Co. Mayo. More than half the area of the original lake has now developed into an extensive area of scraw (floating vegetation) or transition mire.

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):

[7140] Transition Mires

With the exception of a few areas of open water, the floating mat of vegetation covers the entire western half of Cloonakillina Lough. It is comprised mainly of sedges (*Carex* sp.), reedbeds and Bogbean (*Menyanthes trifoliata*). The sedge communities are diverse and include Slender Sedge (*Carex lasiocarpa*), Slender Tufted-sedge (*C. acuta*), Lesser Tussock-sedge (*C. diandra*), Long-stalked Yellow-sedge (*C. lepidocarpa*) Bottle Sedge (*C. rostrata*), Greater Tussock-sedge (*C. paniculata*) and Bog Sedge (*C. limosa*). There is also an excellent diversity of tall herbs such as Yellow Loosestrife (*Lysimachia vulgaris*) and Purple Loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*). Rafts of Common Club-rush (*Scirpus lacustris*) occur in shallower areas around the lake and adjacent to islands within the lake.

The islands support stands of broadleaf deciduous woodland adding diversity to the site.

The interior of the site is used for feeding and roosting by small numbers of wildfowl such as Mallard, Teal and Wigeon. Redshank, Curlew, Snipe, Common Sandpiper, Mute Swan and Dunlin are also known to frequent the site.

The margins of the site are used for cattle grazing and other agricultural purposes. There is also a large mature conifer plantation on the north-west and south-west sides which makes this end of the lake quite inaccessible and provides additional cover for birdlife on the lake.

This lake has undergone rapid succession from open water to transition mire since it was first mapped in 1915. This change was probably initiated and accelerated by drainage in the region, but nonetheless the rate of change is quite exceptional. This site is unique in character and is of high conservation significance because of its

considerable size and botanical diversity. It is also an excellent ecological example of one of the successional pathways from open water to raised bog formation.