

SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: DAINGEAN BOG NHA

SITE CODE: 002033

Daingean Bog NHA is located approximately 3 km south-west of Daingean in the townlands of Knockballyboy, Townparks and Clonad in eastern Co. Offaly. The site comprises a raised bog that includes both areas of high bog and cutover bog. The northern and southern margins of the site are bounded by roads, and agricultural fields form most of the boundaries at the east and west of the site.

The site consists of two main lobes. The northern lobe is much larger than the southern one and forms the majority of the high bog in the site. The lobes are separated by a drain running through a narrow, low-lying section between them. The cutover areas surrounding the site have, for the most part, been reclaimed for agriculture. The bog is of particular interest as it is one of the most easterly remaining raised bogs in the country.

Much of the high bog vegetation is typical of the Midland Raised Bog type, consisting of Ling Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*), Cross-leaved Heath (*Erica tetralix*), White Beak-sedge (*Rhynchospora alba*) and bog mosses (*Sphagnum* spp.). Other plants include Bog-myrtle (*Myrica gale*), Bog Asphodel (*Narthecium ossifragum*), Bog-rosemary (*Andromeda polifolia*) and Deergrass (*Scirpus cespitosus*). The bog moss cover is low and consists mainly of species such as *Sphagnum capillifolium* and *S. papillosum*. On the cutover, some areas have been colonised by Gorse (*Ulex* spp.) and Birch (*Betula pubescens*). The Common Spotted-orchid (*Dactylorhiza fuchsii*) can be found beside some pools on the cutover. These pools are vegetated by Bogbean (*Menyanthes trifoliata*), Bottle Sedge (*Carex rostrata*) and the bog moss *Sphagnum papillosum*. The drained low-lying section of the southern lobe is dominated by Gorse and Willow (*Salix* spp.), with a ground flora including Purple Moor-grass (*Molinia caerulea*), Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.), Bog-myrtle (*Myrica gale*), Silverweed (*Potentilla anserina*), Meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*) and Yorkshire-fog (*Holcus lanatus*).

The site is host to a population of Irish Hare, a species listed in the Irish Red Data Book.

Current landuse on the site consists of a small coniferous plantation on cutover at the south-easterly margin of the high bog. Most of the cutover areas around the bog have been reclaimed for agriculture. Drainage associated with these activities and with old areas of peat-cutting, are severely drying out the bog, and have resulted in loss of habitat and damage to the hydrological status of the site, and pose a continuing threat to its viability.

Daingean 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. It is especially important because of its eastern location, at the extreme of the range of raised bogs 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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