



**Site Name: Pollagoona Bog SAC**

**Site Code: 002126**

Pollagoona Bog is located close to the Clare-Galway county boundary, 300 m south-east of Lough Atorick and 10 km south-west of Woodford. The bog is situated on a shallow saddle, on flat to gently sloping land surrounded by conifers at an altitude of 150 m. The site is a small blanket bog that shows some features of a raised bog.

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):

[7130] Blanket Bogs (Active)*
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For such a small blanket bog site, Pollagoona Bog supports a wide diversity of plant species. Bog mosses (*Sphagnum* spp.) are abundant within the site, and there is an extensive cover of Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*). Other species typical of bogs occur commonly, such as Deergrass (*Scirpus cespitosus*), Bog Asphodel (*Narthecium ossifragum*), Common Cottongrass (*Eriophorum angustifolium*) and the beak-sedges *Rhynchospora alba* and *R. fusca*. Of note is the presence on the site of Bog-rosemary (*Andromeda polifolia*), a species more usually found on raised bogs. At its western end the bog supports a small patch of Bog-myrtle (*Myrica gale*). Pollagoona Bog is bordered by a wide margin of Purple Moor-grass (*Molinia caerulea*) intermixed with scattered Bog-myrtle along its southern side. Lichens (*Cladonia* spp.) occur abundantly.

Pollagoona Bog contains extensive, slightly quaking flats of Bog Asphodel and beak-sedges, with hummocks of Heather and mosses (*Sphagnum* spp. and *Hypnum* spp.). At the north-western side of the site, a poorly-developed pool system is found. The pools mostly contain algae, but some also have the bog mosses *S. cuspidatum* and *S. auriculatum*. On the southern and south-eastern side the bog is wetter and more quaking and the pool system found there is colonised by Bogbean (*Menyanthes trifoliata*), Common Cottongrass and bog mosses. Brown Beak-sedge (*R. fusca*) and Bog-sedge (*Carex limosa*) have also been recorded.

Due to its topographical location Pollagoona Bog does not appear to be adversely affected by the surrounding afforestation. Within the site there are two small pockets of forestry, though the trees are sparse, scattered and largely moribund.

Intact blanket bogs are becoming increasingly rare in Ireland through turbary, afforestation and drainage. The scarcity of this habitat in Europe has also been recognised and active blanket bog is listed as a priority habitat on Annex I of the E.U.

Habitats Directive. Pollagoona Bog is a small, but important example of an intact, active saddle blanket bog.