



Site Name: Moanour Mountain SAC

Site Code: 002257

Situated approximately 7 km south-west of Tipperary town, this site lies on the north-western slope of Moanour Mountain, an outlying ridge of the Galtee Mountains. It lies entirely above the 220 m contour line, with a maximum height of 335 m. The site represents probably the only part of this mountainous ridge that retains semi-natural vegetation, the remainder having been afforested.

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):

[4010] Wet Heath [4030] Dry Heath

The lower western part of this site is dominated by acid grassland on mineral soil, characterised by the presence of Heath Bedstraw (*Galium saxatile*), Sheep's-fescue (*Festuca ovina*), Tormentil (*Potentilla erecta*) and Mat-grass (*Nardus stricta*), as well as species such as Common Bent (*Agrostis capillaris*), Green-ribbed Sedge (*Carex binervis*) and Pill Sedge (*C. pilulifera*).

The grassland merges in places with dry heath, with such species as Bell Heather (*Erica cinerea*), Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*) and gorse (*Ulex europaeus* and *U. gallii*). As one moves upslope, the heath gets wetter and wet heath dominates the eastern part of the site. Species present include Purple Moor-grass (*Molinia caerulea*), Deerglass (*Trichophorum cespitosum*), Common Cottongrass (*Eriophorum angustifolium*), Cross-leaved Heath (*Erica tetralix*), Heath Rush (*Juncus squarrosus*), Lousewort (*Pedicularis sylvatica*) and Round-leaved Sundew (*Drosera rotundifolia*). Bryophytes are well represented, with a range of bog mosses (*Sphagnum capillifolium*, *S. cuspidatum* and *S. compactum*), as well as *Campylopus introflexus*, *Odontischisma sphagni* and *Gymnocolea inflata*. The lichen *Cladonia portentosa* occurs. At the summit of Moanour Mountain, the wet heath habitat grades in places to shallow blanket bog.

Land use at the site consists of grazing by sheep.

While a relatively small site, it is of particular conservation importance for the presence of wet heath and dry heath, both good examples of E.U. Habitats Directive Annex I habitats.