

**Site Name: Camderry Bog SAC**

**Site Code: 002347**

Camderry Bog is part of a cluster of bogs in Co. Galway, situated approximately 12 km north-east of Mountbellew and 9 km south-east of Glenamaddy. It is almost entirely within the townlands of Camderry, Boggauns and Corracullin. The site comprises a relatively large raised bog that includes both areas of high bog and cutover bog. The northern and western margins of the site are bounded by the Shiven River, the eastern margin is bounded by a mineral ridge and those to the south by roads.

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):

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|----------------------------------|
| [7110] Raised Bog (Active)*      |
| [7120] Degraded Raised Bog       |
| [7150] Rhynchosporion Vegetation |

Active raised bog comprises areas of high bog that are wet and actively peat-forming, where the percentage cover of bog mosses (*Sphagnum* spp.) is high, and where some or all of the following features occur: hummocks, pools, wet flats, *Sphagnum* lawns, flushes and soaks. Degraded raised bog corresponds to those areas of high bog whose hydrology has been adversely affected by peat cutting, drainage and other land use activities, but which are capable of regeneration. The Rhynchosporion habitat occurs in wet depressions, pool edges and erosion channels where the vegetation includes White Beak-sedge (*Rhynchospora alba*) and/or Brown Beak-sedge (*R. fusca*), and at least some of the following associated species, Bog Asphodel (*Narthecium ossifragum*), sundews (*Drosera* spp.), Deergrass (*Scirpus cespitosus*) and Carnation Sedge (*Carex panicea*).

This site consists of two domes separated by a broad ridge of mineral soil. Overall the northern dome appears to be quite dry with limited areas of wet hummock/hollows. The lower southern dome contains an area of quaking bog with hummocks and tear pools. A small flushed area showing small-scale hummock/hollow development is found on the northern dome, to the north and north-west of a forestry plantation on the high bog. To the east there is an extensive flush with areas of open water. Cutover bog occurs all around the margins of the high bog, apart from a semi-natural margin to the north by the Shiven River.

Much of the high bog has vegetation typical of the Western Raised Bog type, consisting of Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*), cottongrasses (*Eriophorum* spp.) and

Carnation Sedge. Bog mosses (*Sphagnum* spp.) form a spongy mat in places but due to damage from drying out and burning they are rarely present as carpets. Over large areas, especially in the south, lichens (*Cladonia* spp.) occur in abundance. Hummocks of the moss *Racomitrium lanuginosum* occur in the centre of the site and the liverwort *Pleurozia purpurea* is also present. The area of quaking bog has hummocks and hollows, and is characterised by hummocks formed of the bog mosses *S. papillosum* and *S. capillifolium*, extensive lawns of *S. cuspidatum*, with Bogbean (*Menyanthes trifoliata*) and tear pools. There are Bog Asphodel-dominated hollows and the moss *Campylopus atrovirens* occurs at the margins of the tear pools. This area of the site supports several rare species of bog moss, e.g. *S. fuscum* and *S. imbricatum*. In the flushed areas low hummocks of *S. capillifolium* and *S. imbricatum* occur, with Bog Asphodel lawns and abundant Cranberry (*Vaccinium oxycoccos*). The large eastern flush consists of a depression with open water and *S. cuspidatum* around the margin. Other species present include Soft Rush (*Juncus effusus*), Bogbean and cottongrasses (*Eriophorum angustifolium* and *E. vaginatum*).

The old cutover is mainly dominated by Heather, Purple Moor-grass (*Molinia caerulea*), Soft Rush and cottongrasses. Gorse (*Ulex europaeus*), birch (*Betula* sp.) and willows (*Salix* spp.) also occur along the drains. Along the north of the site on the banks of the Shiven River, Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), willow and Heather grow with typical river bank species such as Meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*), Common Nettle (*Urtica dioica*) and docks (*Rumex* spp.). An area of cutover to the east of the site is waterlogged by water discharged from the high bog. Drains in this cutover contain species indicative of some enrichment, such as Bog Pondweed (*Potamogeton polygonifolius*) and Bottle Sedge (*Carex rostrata*). To the south, old cutover is very wet and regenerating well, with a good cover of bog mosses, including species such as *S. papillosum*, *S. capillifolium* and *S. auriculatum*. Here, Purple Moor-grass and cottongrasses over a carpet of bog mosses is the dominant vegetation.

Red Grouse, a Red Listed species and one that is becoming increasingly rare in Ireland, has been recorded on the site.

Current land use on the site consists of peat-cutting around the edge of the high bog and forestry. Active peat-cutting is carried out to the south, east and north-west using mechanised methods for peat extraction. Damaging activities associated with these land uses include drainage and extensive and frequent burning of the high bog. 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. The whole site may have subsided due to water loss from drainage in the past.

Camderry Bog is a site of considerable conservation significance as it comprises a large 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, tear pools, flushes and regenerating cutover, as well as a number of scarce plant species. Active raised bog is listed as a priority habitat on Annex I of the E.U. Habitats Directive. Priority status is

given to habitats and species that are threatened throughout the E.U. Ireland has a high proportion of the total E.U. resource of this habitat (over 60%) and so has a special responsibility for its conservation at an international level.