

Site Name: Moanveanlagh Bog SAC

Site Code: 002351

Moanveanlagh Bog is situated in Co. Kerry approximately 6 km east of Listowel, mainly within the townlands of Carhooeara and Bunagarha. The site comprises a raised bog that includes both areas of high bog and cutover 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):

[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 is a relatively flat site with some marginal areas that slope relatively steeply towards the cutover. There are a few large hummocks but over much of the site the micro-topography is very uniform. A flush area extends along the north and north-east of the site. In the south-west a bog burst has occurred and concentrically arranged tear pools can be seen, some of which are up to 12 m long. A swallow hole occurs near the middle of the site. Cutover bog occurs around the south-west, south and south-eastern margins of the high bog.

Much of the high bog has vegetation typical of a Western Raised Bog. The vegetation of the high bog is dominated by Bog Asphodel, White Beak-sedge, Cross-leaved Heath (*Erica tetralix*) and Carnation Sedge. Small patches of the moss *Racomitrium lanuginosum* and Common Lousewort (*Pedicularis sylvatica*) occur at the site. Purple Moor-grass (*Molinia caerulea*) is very common in the flush areas. The tear pools are mostly bare of vegetation but some support bladderwort (*Utricularia* sp.) and the bog mosses *S. cuspidatum* and *S. auriculatum*, with *S. papillosum* and the moss *Campylopus*

atrovirens occurring at the pool edges. Towards the margins of the bog Bog-myrtle (*Myrica gale*) is frequent.

Current land uses on the site consist of a small area of peat-cutting at the margins and a low level of grazing by cattle in the north-east section of the high bog. Peat-cutting has significantly declined since the 1970s. Other damaging operations include extensive fire damage, which is still occurring, and the dumping of household refuse and cars around the high bog. These are all activities that have resulted in the loss of habitat and damage to the hydrological status of the site, and pose a continuing threat to its viability. This site also suffers from invasive species, with the shrub *Rhododendron ponticum* recorded on the western edge of the site and the carnivorous Pitcher Plant (*Sarracenia purpurea*) forming a large colony.

Moanveanlagh Bog is significant in terms of its geographical location as it is at the extreme south-western range of raised bogs in Ireland. Moanveanlagh Bog is a site of considerable conservation significance as it comprises a 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 flushes. 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 type (over 60%) and so has a special responsibility for its conservation at an international level.