

Site Name: Tullaghanrock Bog SAC

Site Code: 002354

Tullaghanrock Bog is situated approximately 5 km east of Ballaghaderreen, Co. Roscommon, and is located in the townlands of Tullaghan Rock and Creggan. The site comprises a raised bog that includes both areas of high bog and cutover bog. The southern and eastern margins are bounded by the River Lung and the old Ballaghaderreen railway line adjoins the north-west margin.

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 bog has developed between a ridge and a river, and has a domed surface with an undulating pattern of hummocks and pools. There is a small plantation to the south-east of the high bog. To the south and east there is a semi-natural margin between the high bog and the River Lung. Cutover bog occurs around the remaining margins of the high bog, and in particular on the northern margin where it grades into agricultural land.

Much of the high bog has vegetation typical of the Western Raised Bog type, consisting of Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*), Common Cottongrass (*Eriophorum angustifolium*), Deergrass, Carnation Sedge and the bog moss *Sphagnum magellanicum*. The pools contain the bog mosses *Sphagnum cuspidatum* and *S. auriculatum*, with White Beak-sedge, Bogbean (*Menyanthes trifoliata*) and Great Sundew (*Drosera anglica*). The hummocks are formed by bog mosses such as *S. magellanicum*, *S.*

papillosum and *S. capillifolium*, Heather, Cross-leaved Heath (*Erica tetralix*) and Deergrass. The hummocks also contain support Crowberry (*Empetrum nigrum*), Cranberry (*Vaccinium oxycoccos*) and Round-leaved Sundew (*Drosera rotundifolia*). Where the Lung River forms a natural southern boundary to Tullaghanrock Bog, a strip of wet grassland habitat runs between the bog and the river. Common species found here include Tufted Hair-grass (*Deschampsia cespitosa*), Creeping Bent (*Agrostis stolonifera*), Meadow Foxtail (*Alopecurus pratensis*), Meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*) and Wild Angelica (*Angelica sylvestris*). In the south-west there is active regeneration of cutover, with extensive patches of *Sphagnum cuspidatum* and Common Cottongrass occurring here. Other areas of old cutover bog now support Purple Moor-grass (*Molinia caerulea*) and Gorse (*Ulex europaeus*).

Current land use on the site consists of a small forestry plantation on the south-eastern high bog and another on the western margin. Areas of cutover have been reclaimed for agricultural grassland on the west and north-west margins and agricultural grazing occurs on the southern boundary. Peat-cutting no longer occurs on this site. While most of the drains are old and infilling, there are new deep drains around the forestry.

Tullaghanrock 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 hummock/hollow complexes, pools, flushes and regenerating cutover. 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.