

## SITE SYNOPSIS

**SITE NAME: BALLYKENNY-FISHERSTOWN BOG SPA**

**SITE CODE: 004101**

Ballykenny-Fisherstown Bog SPA is located on the border between Counties Longford and Roscommon in the north-central midlands and is underlain by Carboniferous limestone. It is centered around Lough Forbes, a naturally eutrophic lake on the River Shannon system which is fed also from the north by the River Rinn. The lake has well-developed swamp vegetation and displays natural transitions to seasonally flooded grassland, marsh and raised bog. The raised bogs, known as the Ballykenny-Fishertown complex, are separated by the Camlin River, which has further areas of callow grassland. The central core areas of the bogs are quite wet with a good complement of bog mosses (*Sphagnum* spp.) and well-developed hummocks. Ballykenny Bog is unusual in that some of its margins are intact, a rare feature in the Irish midlands. Between the Camlin River and this bog, a complete transition from raised bog to callow grasslands can be seen, while the interface between the bog and lake is colonised by a narrow band of deciduous woodland.

At the time this site was designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) it was being used by part of the Loughs Kilglass and Forbes Greenland White-fronted Goose population. The geese appear to have since abandoned the peatland sites in favour of grassland sites elsewhere. The site was regularly utilised during the 1980s and Greenland White-fronted Goose is regarded as a special conservation interest for this SPA. The last record of Greenland White-fronted Goose at this site was in 1990/91 (111 individuals).

Merlin and Red Grouse have also been recorded within the site.

The lake and callow grasslands provide good habitat for a range of wintering waterfowl species though most occur in relatively low numbers: Cormorant (51), Whooper Swan (40), Wigeon (419), Teal (444), Tufted Duck (49) and Goldeneye (11) – are counts are two year mean peaks for the period 1998/99 to 1999/2000.