

SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: FOUR ROADS TURLOUGH SPA

SITE CODE: 004140

Four Roads Turlough (also known as Cloonlaughnan Turlough) is located 6 km south of Athleague, Co. Roscommon and just over 2 km east of the River Suck. It lies below a low scarp of limestone hills and is an open, shallow basin without permanent standing water which floods regularly and dries out early.

The site is a Special Protection Area (SPA) under the E.U. Birds Directive, of special conservation interest for the following species: Greenland White-fronted Goose and Golden Plover. The E.U. Birds Directive pays particular attention to wetlands and, as these form part of this SPA, the site and its associated waterbirds are of special conservation interest for Wetland & Waterbirds.

Four Roads Turlough is an important site for wintering waterfowl. In most winters it is visited by the nationally important River Suck population of Greenland White-fronted Goose (93 – four year mean peak for four of the five winters between 1994/95 and 1998/99). The site also supports a nationally important population of Golden Plover (3,717) – all figures are mean peaks for three of the five winters between 1995/96 and 1999/2000). Other species which occur regularly include Wigeon (307), Teal (657), Mallard (84), Shoveler (28) and Lapwing (1,521). It is also occasionally used by Whooper Swan. Breeding species include Lapwing and Snipe. Much of the site is a Wildfowl Sanctuary.

Four Roads Turlough SPA is of ornithological importance because it is regularly utilised by the nationally important River Suck Greenland White-fronted Goose flock. A nationally important population of Golden Plover also occurs at the site. The regular occurrence of these two species, which are listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive, is of note.