

DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

DECLARATION OF AREA OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST AT FARDRUM AND ROOSKY TURLOUGHES, COUNTY FERMANAGH. ARTICLE 24 OF THE NATURE CONSERVATION AND AMENITY LANDS (NORTHERN IRELAND) ORDER 1985.

The Department of the Environment for Northern Ireland (the Department), having consulted the Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside and being satisfied that the area delineated and described on the attached map (the area) is of special scientific interest by reason of the flora, fauna and physiographical features and accordingly needs to be specially protected, hereby declares the area to be an area of special scientific interest to be known as the 'Fardrum and Roosky Turloughs Area of Special Scientific Interest'.

A turlough is a "dry lake", which floods in winter or periods of prolonged rainfall and dries out, partially or completely, in dry periods, especially during summer. Turloughs are always found within limestone areas and these particular examples occur within the area of the Ballyshannon Limestone Formation of Carboniferous age. There are three turloughs in the group: Roosky Lough is the southermost, Green Lough lies to the north, with Fardrum Lough between the two, and they constitute the only examples in Northern Ireland. In addition they represent the most northerly occurrence of this habitat in Ireland.

The Fardrum and Roosky turloughs all lie within a basin formed in the Ballyshannon Limestones. In general, inflowing water comes through the limestone via risings, especially noticeable at Roosky Lough. Outflow is also through the limestone, via sinks, which can be clearly seen during dry periods at Roosky and Green Loughs.

The turloughs all exhibit distinctive vegetation communities associated with the inundation zone (the area flooded during high water periods but exposed when the water level in the turlough is low). Silverweed Potentilla anserina, Marsh Pennywort Hydrocotyle vulgaris, Selfheal Prunella vulgaris and Creeping-Jenny Lysimachia nummularia are all associated with the upper part of this zone. The unusual looking Adder's-Tongue Fern Ophioglossum vulgatum is present in places, while the nationally rare Fen Violet Viola persicifolia has also been recorded at Green Lough. Heath Dog-violet Viola canina is also present here, one of its few occurrences in Northern Ireland.

Two mosses which are very characteristic of turloughs are present, namely Cinclidotus fontinaloides and Fontinalis antipyretica, the former generally being found at lower levels than the latter.

Permanently wet basins within the turloughs support vegetation typical of lakes and lake shores. The more common species include White Water-Lily Nymphaea alba, Bogbean Menyanthes trifoliata, Amphibious Bistort Persicaria amphibia, Fine-leaved Water-Dropwort Oenanthe aquatica, Bottle Sedge Carex rostrata and Pond Water-Crowfoot Ranunculus peltatus. Some of these form very extensive swards. More rare and unusual species recorded include Least Bur-reed Sparganium natans and Tufted-sedge Carex elata.

Some of the land adjoining the turloughs also contains notable habitats. There are areas of dense scrub dominated by Hazel Corylus avellana. These have a flushed, calcicolous (base-rich) ground flora, dominated by Wood Anemone Anemone nemorosa and Bluebell Hyacinthoides non-scripta. Broad-leaved Helleborine Epipactis helleborine has been recorded. More open scrub contains the uncommon shrubs Buckthorn Rhamnus cathartica and Spindle Euonymus europaeus. Notable elements in the ground flora include Northern Bedstraw Galium boreale.

The turloughs support a range of water beetles, with the species Rhantus frontalis being typical of such ephemeral waterbodies. Green Lough supports a very rich ground beetle fauna including the carabids Blethisa multipunctata and Pelophila borealis. One particularly notable species is the rove beetle Philonthus corvinus which is rare across the whole of its range. In total, these wetlands have contributed records of nine beetles that are new to Fermanagh.

SCHEDULE

The following operations and activities appear to the Department to be likely to damage the flora, fauna and physiographical features of the area:

1. Any activity or operation which involves the damage or disturbance by any means of the surface and subsurface of the land, including ploughing, rotovating, harrowing, reclamation and extraction of minerals, including rock, sand, gravel and peat.
2. Grazing by livestock.
3. Any rolling, mowing or cutting.
4. Application of manure, slurry or artificial fertiliser.
5. The application of herbicides, fungicides or other chemicals deployed to kill any form of wild plant, other than plants listed as being noxious in the Noxious Weeds (Northern Ireland) Order 1977.
6. The storage or dumping, spreading or discharge of any material not specified under paragraphs (4) or (5) above.

7. The destruction, displacement, removal or cutting of any plant, seed or plant remains, other than for
 - (i) plants listed as being noxious in the Noxious Weeds (Northern Ireland) Order 1977;
 - (ii) normal cutting or mowing regimes for which a consent is not required under paragraph (3) above.
8. The release into the area of any animal (other than in connection with normal grazing practice) or plant. 'Animal' includes birds, mammals, fish, reptiles, amphibians and invertebrates; 'Plant' includes seed, fruit or spore.
9. Burning.
10. Changes in tree or woodland management, including afforestation, planting, clearing, selective felling and coppicing.
11. Construction, removal or disturbance of any permanent or temporary structure including building, engineering or other operations.
12. Alteration of natural or man-made features, the clearance of boulders or stones and grading of rock faces.
13. Operations or activities which would affect wetlands (including rivers, streams and open water), eg
 - (i) change in the methods or frequency of routine drainage maintenance;
 - (ii) modification to the structure of any watercourse;
 - (iii) lowering of the water-table, permanently or temporarily;
 - (iv) change in the management of bank-side vegetation.
14. The killing or taking of any animal in a manner likely to affect the continued existence of the species within the area except as provided for under the terms of the Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985.
15. The following activities undertaken in a manner likely to damage the interest of the area:
 - (i) educational activities;
 - (ii) research activities;
 - (iii) recreational activities;
 - (iv) exercising of animals.

16. Changes in game, waterfowl, or fisheries management or fishing or hunting practices.
17. Sampling of rocks, minerals, fossils or any other material forming a part of the site, undertaken in a manner likely to damage the scientific interest.
18. Use of vehicles or craft likely to damage the interest of the area.

Sealed with the Official Seal of the
Department of the Environment for
Northern Ireland on

21 February 1997



ROBERT C MARTIN
Chief Executive

H Spratt
CIVIL SERVANT
CLARENCE COURT
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FOOTNOTES

- (a) Please note that consent by the Department to any of the operations or activities listed in the Schedule does not constitute planning permission. Where required, planning permission must be applied for in the usual manner to the Department under Part IV of the Planning (Northern Ireland) Order 1991. Operations or activities covered by planning permission are not normally covered in the list of Notifiable Operations.
- (b) Also note that many of the operations and activities listed in the Schedule are capable of being carried out either on a large scale or in a very small way. While it is impossible to define exactly what is "large" and what is "small", the Department would intend to approach each case in a common sense and practical way. It is very unlikely that small scale operations would give rise for concern and if this was the case the Department would normally give consent, particularly if there is a long history of the operation being undertaken in that precise location.