

## DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

DECLARATION OF AREA OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST AT GLENARIFF, COUNTY ANTRIM  
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 Committee for Nature Conservation and being satisfied that the area delineated by the solid black line on the attached map (the area) is of special scientific interest by reason of the woodland flora and fauna and accordingly needs to be specially protected, hereby declares the area to be an area of special scientific interest and to be known as the "Glenariff area of special scientific interest".

The area is of special scientific interest because it is the largest remaining area of undisturbed semi-natural woodland on the basalt escarpment of County Antrim, and contains a variety of associated physical features such as streams, waterfalls, scree slopes and cliffs.

A large number of typical woodland plant species occur. Hazel (Corylus avellana) is the dominant species over most of the site, occasionally with an open overstorey of Ash (Fraxinus excelsior). Rowan (Sorbus aucuparia) occurs throughout the site, with Birch (Betula pubescens) and Willows (Salix spp.) also frequent.

The upper slopes are particularly unstable and are characterised by a sparse cover of species such as Primrose (Primula vulgaris) and Sanicle (Sanicula europaea). The lower slopes are more stable and support a dense field layer with a wide range of woodland communities typical of heavy, nutrient-rich soils. Indeed, almost all of the ground flora communities associated with Antrim hazelwoods are well represented on the site. In addition, there are natural transitions to basalt cliffs above, and herb-rich meadows below.


Several scarce vascular plant species are found where the woodland adjoins the basalt cliffs, including Yew (Taxus baccata), Juniper (Juniperus communis), Thyme Broomrape (Orobancha alba) and Spring Sandwort (Minuartia verna).

The following operations and activities appear to the Department to be likely to damage the flora and/or fauna of the area:-

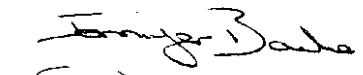
- Cultivation, including ploughing, rotovating, harrowing or re-seeding.
- The introduction of grazing or changes in the grazing regime, including changes in type of livestock or significant increase or decrease in livestock population, or changes in the seasonal pattern of grazing or cessation of grazing.
- The introduction of livestock feeding.
- The introduction of mowing or other methods of cutting vegetation.
- Application of manure, slurry, fertilizers or lime.
- Application of pesticides, herbicides, fungicides or other chemicals deployed to kill, selectively or non-selectively, any form of animal, plant or other living organism.
- Dumping, spreading or discharge of any matter.
- Burning.

- The release into the area of any wild, feral or domestic animal (except for existing grazing purposes as detailed above), plant, or seed. "Animal" includes any mammal, reptile, amphibian, bird, fish or invertebrate.
- The killing or removal of any wild animal. "Animal" includes any mammal, reptile, amphibian, bird, fish or invertebrate.
- The destruction, displacement, removal or cutting of any plant, seed or plant remains.
- Tree or woodland management (including afforestation, planting, clear and selective felling, thinning, coppicing, modification of the stand or underwood or changes in species composition).
- Drainage, including the use of mole, tile, tunnel or other artificial drains.
- Modification of the structure of water courses (for example, rivers, burns, ditches or drains), including their banks and beds as by realignment, regrading or dredging.
- Management of aquatic or bank vegetation.
- The alteration of water levels or water tables or utilisation of water (including storage or abstraction).
- Infilling of ditches, drains or marshes.
- Extraction of minerals including sand, gravel, topsoil, sub-soil or chalk.
- Construction, removal or destruction of roads, tracks, walls, fences, hard-standings, banks, ditches or other earthworks or the laying, maintenance or removal of pipelines or cables, above or below ground.
- Storage of materials.
- Erection of permanent or temporary structures or the undertaking of building, engineering or other operations, including drilling, or the formation of access roads.
- Alteration or modification of natural or man-made features, (including cave entrances), clearance of boulders, large stones, loose rock or scree, infilling of pits or quarries.
- Use of vehicles likely to damage the vegetation.
- Recreational, educational or research activities likely to damage the vegetation.
- Changes in game management or hunting practices.

Sealed with the Official Seal of the  
 Department of Environment for  
 Northern Ireland on 15th April 1987.

  
 J C L PHILLIPS  
 Assistant Secretary

2.

  
 Civil Servant,  
 Bath of Stomont  
 Belfast.