

## DECLARATION OF AREA OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST AT LACKAN BOG, COUNTY DOWN.

## 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 by the solid black lines on the attached map (the area) is of special scientific interest by reason of its wetland flora and fauna and accordingly needs to be specially protected, hereby declares the area to be an area of special scientific interest to be known as the "Lackan Bog area of special scientific interest".

Formerly a raised bog, but now completely cut over, Lackan Bog represents one of the largest single blocks of lowland peatland left in County Down. The area forms an extensive wetland with a complex mosaic of vegetation communities. These communities occupy sites characterised by water depth and acidity, and by the time lapse since peat working ceased.

Poor-fen vegetation occupies large areas of the site. Here, acid-loving species such as Purple Moor-grass Molinia caerulea and Cotton Grass Eriophorum angustifolium grow over carpets of Sphagnum bog-mosses. These occur beside more species-rich areas with Bogbean Menyanthes trifoliata, Marsh Cinquefoil Potentilla palustris and Bottle Sedge Carex rostrata present. Deeper cuttings have produced pools with open water and a variety of aquatic species eg two species of Bladderwort Utricularia spp. and Bog Pondweed Potamogeton polygonifolius. Further habitat variety is provided by areas of scrubby woodland, where Birch Betula pubescens and Willow Salix spp. dominate, and remnant bog vegetation (dominated by the heathers, Calluna vulgaris and Erica tetralix) which is still found in a few places.

The size of the site and the variety of plant communities present are of considerable significance to other aspects of the wildlife and Lackan Bog is one of the most important sites in Ireland for dragonflies. Fourteen out of the total Irish list of 22 species have been recorded from the site, and at least 13 of these are believed to be resident. Notable species include the Hairy Dragonfly Brachytron pratense, the Ruddy Darter Sympetrum sanguineum and the Irish Damselfly Coenagrion lunulatum. Dragonflies are particularly dependent on the presence of pools with clean, fairly acid water, but also require extensive areas of undisturbed ground around for feeding. Lackan Bog fulfils these requirements by virtue of its large size and wide variety of habitats.

## SCHEDULE

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

1. Grazing.
2. The disturbance or modification of the vegetation, land surface, sub-surface, water levels or water courses whether by peat cutting, engineering works, drainage works, the application, spreading or storage of any material whatsoever on or to the vegetation or land surface, or by any other means.

3. Burning.
4. The introduction or release into the area of any wild, feral or domestic animal, plant or seed. "Animal" includes any mammal, reptile, amphibian, bird, fish or invertebrate.
5. The destruction, displacement, removal or cutting of any plant, seed or plant remains.
6. Use of vehicles or craft likely to damage the vegetation or disturb the wildlife.
7. Recreational, educational or research activities likely to damage the vegetation or disturb the wildlife.
8. The application of any chemicals for control of weeds, insects or diseases.

Sealed with the Official Seal of  
The Department of the Environment for  
Northern Ireland on 8 March, 1993



ASSISTANT SECRETARY

Jo Anne Stockman  
Civil Servant  
BOEHOF STORMONT  
BELFAST

Footnote

Please note that many of the operations and activities listed above 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 give consent, particularly if there is a long history of the operation being undertaken in that precise location.

Y91093/CWB