

Wetlands designated pursuant to Article 2(5) of the Convention on wetlands of International Importance especially as waterfowl habitat, by Ireland, to be included in the list of wetlands of International Importance established under the terms of the Convention.

Owneboy and Knockmoyle/Sheekin nature reserves Co Mayo which have been established as Statutory nature reserves under section 15 of the Wildlife Act 1976 and Lough Barra bog Co Donegal which will soon be afforded statutory protection all shown outlined in black on map nos. 1,2 and 3 respectively are hereby designated by Ireland for inclusion in the List of Wetlands of International Importance under Article 2.5 of the Convention. The sites are owned and managed by the Minister for Energy. This will bring to 8 the total number of sites designated by Ireland.

Owneboy Nature Reserve comprising 397 hectares forms part of an extensive bog of the intermediate type lying in a broad basin. It contains several very wet, pool studded, plateaux and low domes resembling raised bogs and characterised by an abundance of black bog rush (Schoenus nigricans), White-beaked sedge (Rhynchospora alba) and several Sphagnum species. These areas are separated by flushes and broad valleys many of which are very wet with stands of mud sedge (Carex limosa), common reed (Phragmites australis) and purple moor grass (Molinia caerulea). The rare moss (Homalothecium nitens) occurs in some flushes. Drier areas are characterised by vegetation dominated by ling heather (Calluna vulgaris) and purple moor grass.

It is also a feeding and roosting area in winter for one of the few remaining bogland flocks of Greenland White-fronted Geese Anser albifrons flavirostris which is listed in Annex 1 of the EEC Council Directive 79/409 of 2nd April 1979 on the conservation of wildbirds as species whose habitat requires special conservation measures.

Knockmoyle/Sheekin Nature Reserve (732 hectares) forms part of an extensive area of lowland blanket bog with a remarkably dense network of pools and small lakes. Between the pools the peat is relatively dry and has a well developed cover of purple moor grass (Molinia caerulea), deer sedge (Scirpus caespitosa), ling heather (Calluna vulgaris) and Sphagnum capillifolium. Valleys and flushes running through the bog have a rich flora as a result of the absence of burning and grazing, including common reed (Phragmites australis), meadow sweet (Filipendula ulmaria), devil's bit scabious (Succisa pratensis) and willows (Salix

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aurita). A very unusual feature is the presence of small stands of birch (Detula pubescens) and the rare moss Homolothecium intens.

Lough Barra Bog which comprises 176.4 hectares forms part of an extensive area of lowland blanket bog which is one of the most northerly intact sites in the country. It contains a characteristic assemblage of plant species, including purple moor grass (Molinia caerulea), black bog rush (Schoenus nigricans), ling heather (Calluna vulgaris) and deer grass (Scirpus caespitosa). There are small pool complexes and flushes and the valley of the Gweebarra River contains remnants of deciduous native woodland dominated principally by oak, (Quercus petraea).

The Merlin (Falco columbarius) breeds there while in winter a small flock of Greenland White-fronted Geese (Anser albifrons flavirostris) frequents the area. Both are listed in Annex 1 of the EEC Council Directive 79/409 of 2nd April 1979 on the conservation of wildbirds as species whose habitat requires special conservation measures.