

Original description of the NSA from the publication *Scotland's Scenic Heritage* published by the Countryside Commission for Scotland in 1978, and available on the Scottish Natural Heritage website at <http://www.snh.gov.uk/docs/B464646.pdf> (6.52mb)

## **DORNOCH FIRTH NATIONAL SCENIC AREA** *Highland*

### **Description from *Scotland's Scenic Heritage* 1978**

By comparison with other east coast firths the Dornoch Firth is narrow and sinuous, yet it exhibits within its compass a surprising variety of landscapes. It is enclosed by abrupt rounded granitic hills clad in heather moor and scree, their Gaelic names of cnoc, meall and creag giving the clue to their character. Their lower slopes are frequently wooded, oakwoods being a noticeable feature of the area, but with other deciduous and coniferous species represented in plantations which vary from the policy plantings of Skibo Castle to the pines of the Struie Forest.

Interspersed among these hills and plantations are areas of pasture and arable on the lower alluvial lands, with whin and broom a common feature in the hedgerows and on the sandy links of the outer firth. But above all it is the firth itself, with its innumerable bays, sands, flats, shallows and promontories which presents a constantly changing scene as much with the coming and going of the tide as with the changing scene afforded by passage round its shores.

Migdale with its loch expresses an inland variation of the same theme and has been included for the complement it makes to the firth, the last undeveloped estuary of its kind on the east coast.