



Scottish Natural Heritage

CLAISH MOSS

Site of Special Scientific Interest

SITE MANAGEMENT STATEMENT

Site code: 358

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Purpose



This is a public statement prepared by SNH for owners and occupiers of the SSSI. It outlines the reasons it is designated as an SSSI and provides guidance on how its special natural features should be conserved or enhanced. This Statement does not affect or form part of the statutory notification and does not remove the need to apply for consent for operations requiring consent.

We welcome your views on this statement.

This statement is available in Gaelic on request.

Description of the site

Claish Moss Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) consists of a large area of peatland with an adjacent area of hillslope to the south. The site is located on the south shore of Loch Shiel, east of Acharacle, on the Sunart – Ardnamurchan peninsula in Lochaber.

The SSSI is notified for the following features.

Natural features of Claish Moss SSSI	Condition of feature (and date monitored)	Other relevant designations
Blanket bog	Favourable - maintained (Oct 2008)	SAC
Breeding bird assemblage	Favourable - maintained (April 2004)	
Dragonfly assemblage	Favourable - maintained (August 2002)	

Features of overlapping Natura sites that are not notified as SSSI natural features	Condition of feature (and date monitored)	SPA or SAC
Black-throated diver	Unfavourable - declining (July 2003)	SPA
Depressions on peat substrates	Favourable - maintained (Oct 2008)	SAC

Claish Moss is an extensive area of highly oceanic active blanket bog which is predominately classified as eccentric mire, a very rare type in Britain (one of only

three known examples) more commonly found in central Scandinavia. Eccentric mires are characterised by spectacular surface patterns.

The blanket bog is of international importance and when assessed in October 2008 was found to be in favourable condition. The feature has a well developed structure of hummocks, hollows and pools with a rich flora of fourteen sphagnum species and several uncommon species of plants including the nationally scarce brown-beak sedge and bog orchid. There are important natural transitions between the bog and adjacent heathland.

The site supports a nationally important assemblage of breeding birds, which was found to be favourable when assessed in 2004. The assemblage includes a diverse range of species such as hen harrier, greenshank, wheatear and teal.

Claish Moss also supports a nationally important assemblage of dragonfly species, including the nationally scarce azure hawk and the locally rare emerald damselfly. The feature was also found to be in favourable condition when assessed in August 2002.

Past and present management

Claish Moss SSSI has been owned and managed as a National Nature Reserve by SNH and predecessors since 1978. Heavy deer grazing has caused damage in the past, which has been remedied through the erection of a deer fence in 1987, significantly reducing the numbers of deer gaining access to the bog. A small number of deer are culled each year which helps maintain the low number of grazing deer.

Objectives for Management (and key factors influencing the condition of natural features)

We wish to work with the owners and managers to protect the site and to maintain, and where necessary, enhance its features of special interest. SNH aims to carry out site survey, monitoring and research as appropriate, to increase our knowledge and understanding of the site and its natural features and to monitor the effectiveness of management.

The EU Habitats and Birds Directives oblige Government to avoid, in SACs and SPAs, the deterioration of natural habitats and the habitats of species, as well as disturbance of the species for which the areas have been designated, in so far as such disturbance could be significant in relation to the objectives of these Directives. The objectives below have been assessed against these requirements. All authorities proposing to carry out, or permit to be carried out, operations likely to have a significant effect on the European interests of this SSSI must assess those operations against the relevant Natura conservation objectives (which are listed on our website through the SNHi - SiteLink facility).

1. To maintain the extent and condition of the blanket bog by:

- safeguarding against damage by deer grazing or trampling.

- avoiding activities likely to break the bog surface or lead to tracking & erosion
- safeguarding against fire damage.
- maintaining high water tables.

2. To safeguard the breeding bird population by:

- avoiding undue disturbance during both the breeding and wintering season.
- safeguarding against predation.
- maintaining the habitat in sound condition.

3. To maintain the dragonfly assemblage by:

- maintaining the diversity of notable species of dragonflies
- maintaining the bog habitat on which the assemblage is dependant

Date last reviewed: 30 April 2010