

CITATION

CLAISH MOSS
SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST
Highland (Lochaber)

Site code: 358

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE: NM 720675

OS 1:50,000 SHEET NO: Landranger Series: 40
1:25,000 SHEET NO: Explorer Series: 390

AREA: 568.29 hectares

NOTIFIED NATURAL FEATURES:

Biological	:	Bogs:	Blanket bog
	:	Birds:	Breeding bird assemblage
	:	Dragonflies:	Dragonfly assemblage

DESCRIPTION

Claish Moss Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is located on the southern bank at the far western end of Loch Shiel, near the village of Acharacle. Claish Moss is one of the finest examples in Britain of a patterned raised bog system. It is comparable with other highly oceanic western raised bogs such as the one found at Kentra Bay and Moss (5km west) and Blar na Caillich Buidhe (20km north) but is on a much larger scale.

Streams flowing northwards into Loch Shiel, from the slopes of Beinn Resipol, divide the site into three hydrologically distinct raised units, the largest of which is almost 2km across.

Each mire unit takes the form of a shallow dome, with inter-connecting pools and ridges aligned along its contours. On the ridges, heather, cross-leaved heath, cotton grasses and deer grass are dominant, whilst within the pools, species such as bog bean and mud sedge occur. Fourteen *Sphagnum* species have been recorded, including the 'Atlantic' *S.imbricatum*. Other 'Atlantic' bryophytes include *Campylopus atrovirens* and *Pleurozia purpurea*. Hummocks of *Rhacomitrium lanuginosum* are well developed, some reaching 1m in height. Higher plants are well represented and include long-leaved sundew and white beak-sedge, as well as the much rarer brown beak-sedge and bog orchid.

The site supports a nationally important breeding bird community which includes a range of wildfowl and wader species, some of which are restricted to peatland habitats. Hen harrier, greenshank, teal and skylark have all been known to breed at the site along with several other species. The site is also used by a wintering flock of Greenland white-fronted geese.

The site is also notable for its nationally important assemblage of dragonfly species which includes black darter *Sympetrum danae*, blue-tailed damselfly *Ischnura elegans* and common hawkmer *Aeshna juncea*

NOTIFICATION HISTORY:

First notified under the 1949 Act: 1962

Re-notified under the 1981 Act: 5 June 1985

Notification reviewed under the 2004 Act: 30 April 2010

REMARKS:

Measured area of site corrected (from 563 ha)

Part of Claish Moss SSSI is designated as part of Claish Moss and Kentra Moss Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for the European habitats listed below and as part of Loch Shiel Special Protection Area (SPA) for the birds listed below.

Habitats: Blanket bog

Depressions on peat substrates

Birds: Black-throated diver (*Gavia arctica*), Breeding