

## CITATION

**ACHNAHAIRD**  
**SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST**  
Highland (Ross-shire)

Site code: 8159

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE: NC 017133

OS 1:50,000 SHEET NO: Landranger Series 15  
1:25,000 SHEET NO: Explorer Series 439

AREA: 21.38 hectares

## NOTIFIED NATURAL FEATURES

**Biological: Non Vascular plants: Bryophytes**

## DESCRIPTION

Achnahaird Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) covers part of the sand dunes on the west side of Achnahaird Bay, a narrow inlet on the south shore of Enard Bay in northwest Ross-shire. This site has been designated for its bryophyte flora.

The dune slack vegetation of Achnahaird is of national importance for its bryophyte flora. It is the only known site in Scotland for petalwort *Petalophyllum ralfsii*, a small liverwort. Achnahaird has by far the largest population of petalwort known in Britain and is the world's most northerly site for the species. The characteristic habitat of petalwort at Achnahaird is moist dune slacks and the banks of small burns and drainage lines which run through the site. It also occurs in areas of bare, stable sand. Some of the largest colonies occur on areas of open sand which are kept damp by water seeping from higher ground above.

A number of other notable bryophyte species have been recorded from Achnahaird, often occurring in close proximity to the petalwort. These include three species of moss listed as vulnerable (Red Data Book): *Bryum calophyllum*, *B. knowltonii* and *B. warneum*. The site also has populations of the moss *Bryum salinum* which is listed as near threatened (Red Data Book) and *Moerckia hibernica*, another vulnerable liverwort which has very similar habitat requirements to petalwort.

## NOTIFICATION HISTORY

First notified under the 1981 Act: 20 September 2000

Notification reviewed under the 2004 Act: 12 June 2008

## REMARKS

Measured area of site corrected (from 21.37 ha).

Achnahaird SSSI is also designated as Achnahaird Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for petalwort (*Petalophyllum ralfsii*).