

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, ENVIRONMENT AND RURAL AFFAIRS

DECLARATION OF AREA OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST AT GLYNN WOODS, COUNTY ANTRIM. ARTICLE 28 OF THE ENVIRONMENT (NORTHERN IRELAND) ORDER 2002.

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (the Department), having consulted the Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside and being satisfied that the area described and delineated on the attached map (the area) is of special scientific interest by reason of the flora and fauna and accordingly needs to be specially protected, hereby declares the area to be an area of special scientific interest to be known as the 'Glynn Woods Area of Special Scientific Interest'.

This area is of special scientific interest because of the richness and diversity of its woodland vegetation. Located in the townlands of Glynn, Ballyvernstown, Ballylesson, Carnduff and Inver, it is a large, well-established semi-natural woodland with a diverse structure and rich ground flora that supports a number of rare and notable ground-flora species. Glynn Woods ASSI represents the best example of calcicolous scarp woodland in this vicinity and displays high diversity, with a well-developed transitional sequence from wet to dry woodland types.

Glynn Woods ASSI consists of two separate areas; the northern woodland which extends for 1.5 km along the escarpment north of Glynn village to Larne and Glynn River valley, which extends a further 1km inland from the village along the steep-sided slopes of the Glynn River. The northern wood occurs on a moderate to steep east-facing slope, with the mid-section of the wood being notably steep (45-60 degree gradient) and rising from 15m above sea level to over 110m in places. The underlying bedrock is primarily Ulster White Limestone and Hibernian Green Sands, capped by Lower Basalts which were formed by lava flows associated with fissure type eruptions. The Glynn River valley is underlain exclusively by these Palaeogene age rocks of the Lower Basalt Formation. The thin, freely-draining soils associated with the deeply incised valley are derived from this parent material and are typically brown rankers where the woodland has developed on moderate to steep slopes.

The structure and composition of Glynn Woods is influenced by climate, steepness of slope, aspect, soil-type, depth and moisture content, in addition to past and present management. The steepest slopes reflect these physical and edaphic conditions, especially the shallow nature of the soils, through the number of old and recent slope failures and landslides which are apparent along the length of both woods. These landslides provide bare soil and rock on which pioneer woodland species begin to colonise once more. It is the dynamic nature of these steep woodlands, with regard to their structure and diversity, that make them particularly interesting in this region of County Antrim.

On the thin dry soils at the top of the scree slopes and cliff faces, the soils are more acidic in nature, with Downy Birch *Betula pubescens*, Rowan *Sorbus aucuparia*, and occasional Oak *Quercus* spp. growing in association with Ash *Fraxinus excelsior*. The acidic conditions are reflected locally in the ground flora, where small pockets of Great Wood-rush *Luzula sylvatica* and Wood-sorrel *Oxalis acetosella* occur. Other woodland types recorded include small stands of planted Beech *Fagus sylvatica* and conifers, primarily Larch *Larix* spp., with wetter woodland communities present adjacent to the river. However, most of the woodland

has developed naturally on the limestone and basalt and is base-rich (calcicolous) in character. As a consequence, Glynn Woods ASSI is primarily dominated by an Ash *Fraxinus excelsior* canopy with a dense understorey of mature Hazel *Corylus avellana*, although Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus* is prominent in places along the lower slopes of northern wood. Other shrub species include Elder *Sambucus nigra*, Guelder-rose *Viburnum opulus*, Blackthorn *Prunus spinosa* and Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*. Where the wooded slopes are exceptionally steep, the shallow soils are unable to support taller trees and extensive stands of mono-dominant Hazel *Corylus avellana* wood occur. This woodland-type is largely restricted to the Antrim coast of Northern Ireland, reflecting the base-rich soils and underlying geology of the area. Although tall trees may be absent in places, the Hazel *Corylus avellana* stools are mature and the woodland supports the rich and diverse ground flora associated with long-established, base-rich woods.

Beneath the scattered Ash *Fraxinus excelsior* canopy and dense Hazel *Corylus avellana* understorey, the steep slopes support a lush ground flora dominated by ferns, especially Soft Shield-fern *Polystichum setiferum* with occasional Golden-scaled Male-fern *Dryopteris affinis*, Male-fern *Dryopteris filix-mas*, Lady-fern *Athyrium filix-femina* and Broad Buckler-fern *Dryopteris dilatata*. Associated herbs include Primrose *Primula vulgaris*, Bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*, Pignut *Conopodium majus*, Herb-Robert *Geranium robertianum*, Wood Anemone *Anemone nemorosa*, Sanicle *Sanicula europaea*, Wood-sedge *Carex sylvatica*, Germander Speedwell *Veronica chamaedrys*, Wood Avens *Geum urbanum*, Common Dog-violet *Viola riviniana*, Wild Strawberry *Fragaria vesca* and Lords-and-Ladies *Arum maculatum*. Common Ivy *Hedera helix* and Honeysuckle *Lonicera periclymenum* also occur in the ground flora in places, although both these climbers are more frequently associated as epiphytes on the more mature trees. Other species recorded less frequently include Woodruff *Galium odoratum*, Hairy Wood-rush *Luzula pilosa* and Wood Melick *Melica uniflora*.

The heavily shaded woodland floor has favoured the luxuriant growth of mosses characteristic of dense shade, such as Common Feather-moss *Kindbergia praelonga* and Mouse-tail Moss *Isoetecium myosuroides*. However the majority of species are typical of calcareous woods and damp base-rich clay. The most widespread and abundant are Common Striated Feather-moss *Eurhynchium striatum*, Fox-tail Feather-moss *Thamnobryum alopecurum*, Big Shaggy-moss *Rhytidiadelphus triquetrus* and Common Tamarisk-moss *Thuidium tamariscinum*. Other frequent but less abundant species include Hair pointed Feather-moss *Cirriphyllum piliferum*, Hart's-tongue Thyme-moss *Plagiomnium undulatum* and Flat Neckera *Neckera complanata*. A number of characteristic fungi associated with dead wood have also been recorded including Clustered Bonnet *Mycena inclinata*, Hairy Curtain Crust fungus *Stereum hirsutum* and Leafy Brain fungus *Tremella foliacea*.

Taller trees are restricted to areas where the soils are deeper, at the base of slopes and alongside the river where conditions are cooler and humid. The woodland canopy remains dominated by Ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, with Goat Willow *Salix caprea*, Alder *Alnus glutinosa*, Downy Birch *Betula pubescens* and occasional Wych Elm *Ulmus glabra*, with an understorey of Hazel *Corylus avellana* with occasional Holly *Ilex aquifolium* and Rowan *Sorbus aucuparia*. The non-native Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus* is recorded in several locations along the river banks, but its occurrence is infrequent. Glynn River valley is particularly diverse as it supports the river, together with a number of calcareous flushes and small streams which cascade down the steep-sided slopes of the wood as dripping moss-covered seepages and rocky waterfalls. These habitats are ideal for mosses such as Curled Hook-

moss *Palustriella commutata* and liverworts including Greater Featherwort *Plagiochila asplenioides* as well as ferns including Hart's-tongue *Asplenium scolopendrium*.

The woodland ground flora associated with the deeper, often wetter or flushed soils especially along the edge of the Glynn river are dominated by stands of Ramsons *Allium ursinum*, Opposite-leaved Golden-saxifrage *Chrysosplenium oppositifolium* and Lesser Celandine *Ficaria verna*, with Yellow Pimpernel *Lysimachia nemorum*, Remote Sedge *Carex remota*, Meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*, Enchanter's-nightshade *Circaea lutetiana*, Bugle *Ajuga reptans*, Creeping Buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, Wild Angelica *Angelica sylvestris* and Water Avens *Geum rivale*.

Glynn Woods ASSI supports a range of plants, including several rare or notable species such as Bird's-nest Orchid *Neottia nidus-avis*, Toothwort *Lathraea squamaria*, Rough Horsetail *Equisetum hyemale* and Black Spleenwort *Asplenium adiantum-nigrum*.

As an extensive area of semi-natural woodland, Glynn Woods also provide important habitats for mammals, breeding birds and invertebrates.

SCHEDULE

The following operations and activities appear to the Department to be likely to damage the flora, fauna and geological interest of the area:

1. Any activity or operation which involves the damage or disturbance by any means of the surface and subsurface of the land, including ploughing, rotovating, harrowing, reclamation and extraction of minerals including rocks, sand, gravel and peat.
2. Any change in the present annual pattern and intensity of grazing, including any change in the type of livestock used or in supplementary feeding practice.
3. Any change in the established method or frequency of rolling, mowing or cutting.
4. The application of manure, slurry or artificial fertiliser.
5. The application of herbicides, fungicides or other chemicals deployed to kill any form of wild plant, other than plants listed as being noxious in the Noxious Weeds (Northern Ireland) Order 1977.
6. The storage or dumping, spreading or discharge of any material not specified under paragraph 5 above.
7. The destruction, displacement, removal or cutting of any plant, seed or plant remains, other than for:
 - (i) plants listed as noxious in the Noxious Weeds (Northern Ireland) Order 1977;
 - (ii) normal cutting or mowing regimes for which consent is not required under paragraph 3 above.

8. The release into the area of any animal (other than in connection with normal grazing practice) or plant. 'Animal' includes birds, mammals, fish, reptiles, amphibians and invertebrates; 'Plant' includes seed, fruit or spore.
9. Burning.
10. Changes in tree or woodland management, including afforestation, planting, clearing, selective felling and coppicing.
11. Construction, removal or disturbance of any permanent or temporary structure including building, engineering or other operations.
12. Alteration of natural or man-made features, the clearance of boulders or large stones and grading of rock faces.
13. Operations or activities, which would affect wetlands (include marsh, fen, bog, rivers, streams and open water), e.g.
 - (i) change in the methods or frequency of routine drainage maintenance;
 - (ii) modification of the structure of any watercourse;
 - (iii) lowering of the water table, permanently or temporarily;
 - (iv) change in the management of bank-side vegetation.
14. The disturbance, killing or taking of any wild animal except where such killing or taking is treated as an exception in Articles 5, 6, 11, 17, 20, 21 and 22 of the Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985.
15. The following activities undertaken in a manner likely to damage or disturb the wildlife of the area:
 - (i) educational activities;
 - (ii) research activities;
 - (iii) recreational activities;
 - (iv) exercising of animals.
16. Changes in game, waterfowl or fisheries management or fishing or hunting practices.
17. Sampling of rocks, minerals, fossils or any other material forming a part of the site, undertaken in a manner likely to damage the scientific interest.
18. Use of vehicles or craft likely to damage or disturb the wildlife of the area.

FOOTNOTES

- (a) Please note that consent by the Department to any of the operations or activities listed in the Schedule does not constitute planning permission. Where required, planning permission must be applied for in the usual manner to the council or the Department of Infrastructure under Part 3 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011. Operations or activities covered by planning permission are not normally covered in the list of Notifiable Operations.

- (b) Also note that many of the operations and activities listed in the Schedule are capable of being carried out either on a large scale or in a very small way. While it is impossible to define exactly what is large and what is small, the Department would intend to approach each case in a common sense and practical way. It is very unlikely that small scale operations would give rise for concern and if this was the case the Department would normally give consent, particularly if there is a long history of the operation being undertaken in that precise location.

GLYNN WOODS

Views About Management The Environment (Northern Ireland) Order 2002 Article 28(2)

A statement of the Department's views about the management of Glynn Woods Area of Special Scientific Interest ("the ASSI")

This statement represents the views of the Department about the management of the ASSI for nature conservation. This statement sets out, in principle, our views on how the area's special conservation interest can be conserved and enhanced. The Department has a duty to notify the owners and occupiers of the ASSI of its views about the management of the land.

Not all of the management principles will be equally appropriate to all parts of the ASSI and there may be other management activities, additional to our current views, which can be beneficial to the conservation and enhancement of the features of interest. It is also very important to recognise that management may need to change with time.

The management views set out below do not constitute consent for any operation or activity. The written consent of the Department is still required before carrying out any operation or activity likely to damage the features of special interest (see the Schedule on pages 3-5 for a list of these operations and activities). The Department welcomes consultation with owners, occupiers and users of the ASSI to ensure that the management of this area maintains and enhances the features of interest, and to ensure that all necessary prior consents are obtained.

MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

Mixed ashwoods

Mixed ashwoods represent an important habitat for wildlife, providing food and shelter for a wide variety of mammals, birds and invertebrates.

The Department would encourage the maintenance and enhancement of the woodland, through the development of its structure and the conservation of its associated native plants and animals.

Specific objectives include:

Encourage the woodland to become more "mature" by avoiding disturbance. The structure of the wood will gradually become more diverse, with well-developed canopy, shrub and ground layers and an abundance of species like Ivy, mosses, liverworts and lichens that live on the trees themselves.

Encourage the retention of dead wood, both on the woodland floor and still standing in the canopy. Dead wood is a very important habitat for some of the less conspicuous woodland species, such as fungi and invertebrates.

Encourage regeneration of woodland and discourage damage to trees and shrubs through the control of grazing and browsing. In general, natural regeneration is preferable to planting.

Management principles applicable to all habitats and features throughout the site

Ensure that disturbance to the site and its wildlife is minimised.

Discourage non-native species, especially those that tend to spread at the expense of native wildlife.

Maintain the diversity and quality of habitats associated with the main habitats, such as scrub, stream and hedgerow, through sensitive management. These adjoining habitats can often be very important for wildlife.

Sealed with the Official Seal of the
Department of Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs hereunto affixed
is authenticated by

[Signed By]

HELEN ANDERSON
Senior Officer of the
Department of Agriculture,
Environment and Rural Affairs

Dated the 31 of March 2017

GLYNN WOODS

A SPECIAL PLACE...



View of Glynn River valley

SITES OF BIOLOGICAL AND EARTH SCIENCE IMPORTANCE HAVE BEEN SURVEYED BY NORTHERN IRELAND ENVIRONMENT AGENCY TO ASSESS THEIR SCIENTIFIC INTEREST. THE BEST SITES ARE NOW BEING DECLARED AS AREAS OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST (ASSIs). IN DOING SO WE AIM TO SAFEGUARD THESE IMPORTANT SITES FOR THE BENEFIT OF PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS

In the past, most of Ireland was covered by forest. As agriculture spread, woodlands declined in extent. Today, less than 2% of Northern Ireland has a semi-natural woodland cover, making it one of the least wooded areas in Europe.

Woodlands are comprised of different layers; canopy, field, shrub and ground layer. Each provides a wide range of food sources and places for wildlife to inhabit. These woodland layers are home to flowering plants and a range of less conspicuous species such as mosses, liverworts and lichens. Fungi, such as Clustered Bonnet, also commonly occur in woods and are of particular importance because they recycle nutrients from fallen leaves and dead wood. Inconspicuous animals such as insects and spiders are also often present in abundance as the complex woodland structure provides food and shelter.



Clustered Bonnet

Glynn Woods ASSI is a special place because of the richness and diversity of its woodland vegetation. It is largely composed of mature Hazel with scattered Ash standards reflecting the base-rich nature of the soils. The field layer supports frequent ferns including Lady-fern, Soft Shield-fern, Male-fern, Hard-fern and Broad Buckler-fern. Exposed cliff faces and large boulders also support Hart's-tongue fern. On the ground, the vegetation supports a good range of species including Wood Avens, Wood Anemone, Primrose, Sanicle, Hairy Wood-rush, Herb Robert, Woodruff, Wood-sedge, Wood Melick and Bluebell. Beneath these woodland plants, a carpet of mosses includes species such as Common Tamarisk-moss, Big Shaggy-moss and Common Feather-moss.

The shallow nature of the soils at Glynn Woods results in frequent landslides which enable new areas of woodland to regenerate over long periods of time. Consequently the woodland is one of the most interesting in the Antrim area with regard to its structure and diversity.

Glynn River valley is particularly important as a wooded river corridor where the fast flowing stream occurs, together with a number of calcareous flushes and rocky waterfalls.

The northern woodland contains the best example of a base-rich Ash scarp wood in this vicinity.

The woodland supports a good overall diversity in its floral communities as they move through a transitional sequence from wet to dry types. A number of rare and notable species such as Bird's-nest Orchid, Rough Horsetail, Toothwort, and Black Spleenwort have been recorded.

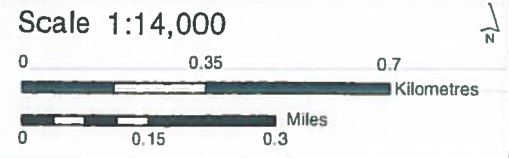
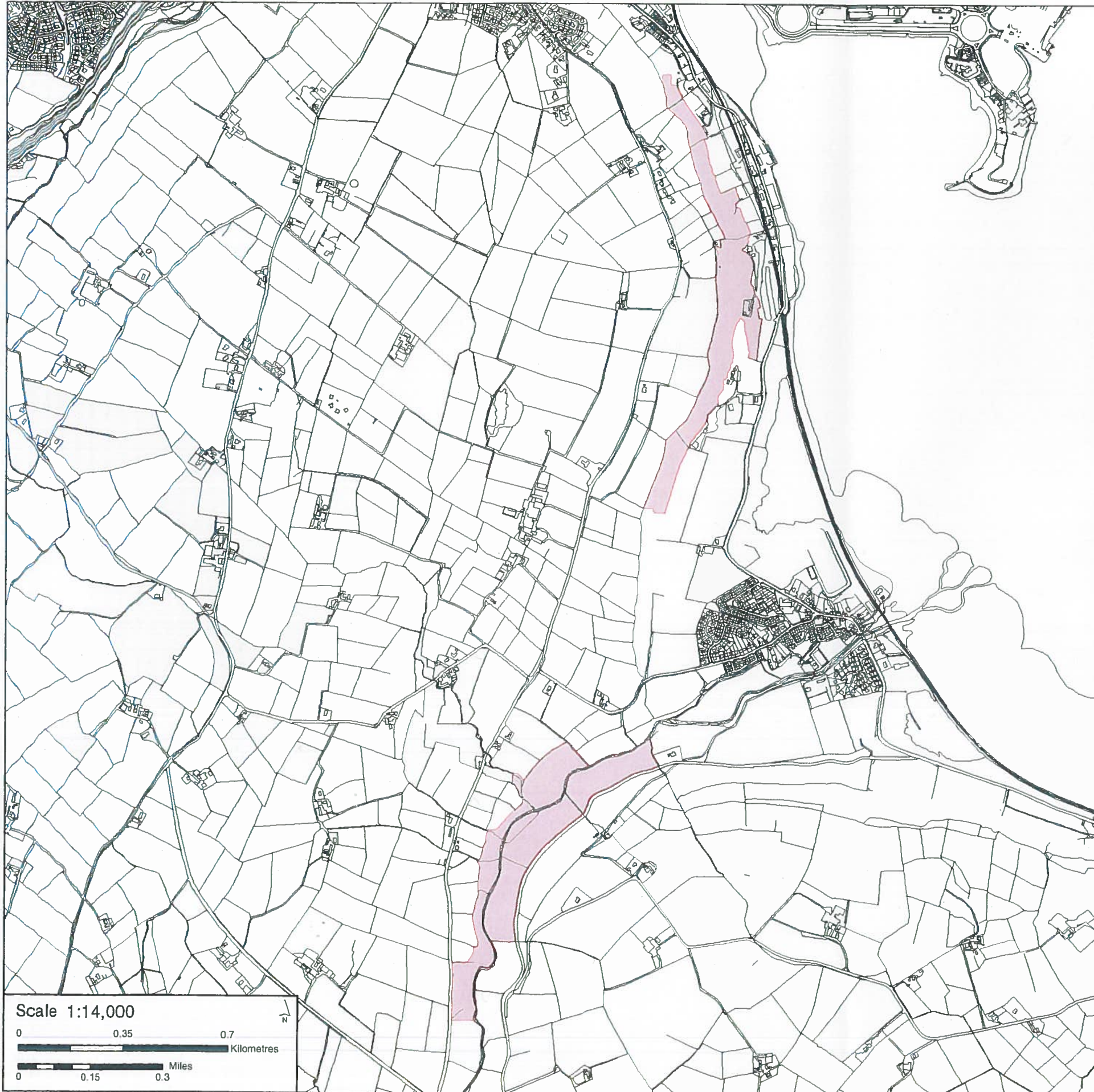


Bird's-nest Orchid

Glynn Woods also provides an important habitat for animals, including mammals, birds and invertebrates.

Woods take a long time to develop into mature systems because they have a complex structure and many of the plants are slow to grow and spread. It is therefore vitally important that all remaining areas of woodland are retained and new areas are encouraged to regenerate. The Northern Ireland Environment Agency aims to work with landowners to ensure places like Glynn Woods are protected for the future.

GLYNN WOODS ASSI



GLYNN WOODS

AREA OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST

Map referred to in the Declaration dated: 31st MARCH 2017

SITE BOUNDARY: The Area of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI) includes all the lands highlighted within the solid coloured lines.

AREA OF SITE: 27.94 hectares

OS MAPS 1:50,000: Sheet No. 9
1:10,000: Sheet Nos. 70,83

IRISH GRID REFERENCE: D 404 011
J 397 992

COUNCIL AREA: MID AND EAST ANTRIM BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNTY: ANTRIM

Helen Anderson

HELEN ANDERSON
SENIOR OFFICER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE, ENVIRONMENT AND RURAL AFFAIRS

