

6 MOYCULLEN BOGS HERITAGE TRAIL



Welcome to 'The Moycullen Bogs Heritage Trail.' This is part of a series of trails celebrating the rich and diverse heritage in the area. The trail is a 23km loop route through various townlands in the Parishes of Moycullen and Bearna. The route travels through the Moycullen Bogs, National Heritage area (NHA), which stretches from Tonabrocky to Slieveaneena, and from the coast road in Spiddal to the N59 road in Moycullen - <https://moycullen.galwaycommunityheritage.org>



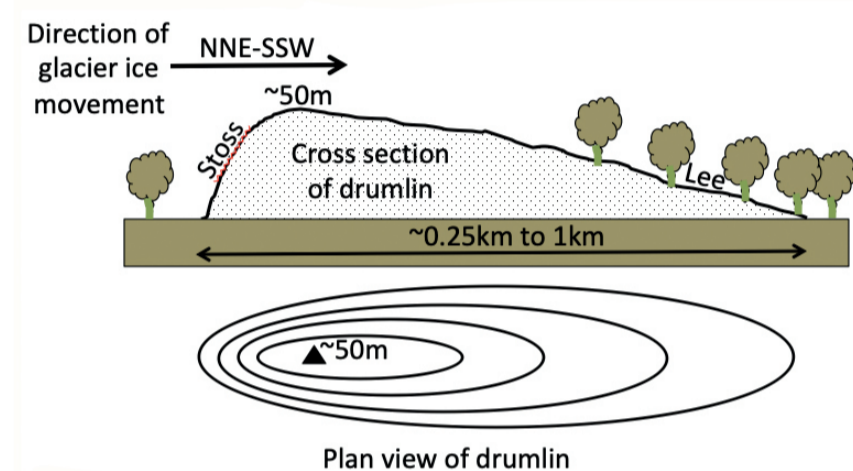
23km

1km



Granite - Limestone Boundary

Drumlins



Geology

Moycullen is situated just to the southwest of the faulted contact between the c.400-million-year-old Galway Granite and the c.340-million-year-old Carboniferous Limestone. The trail area is dominated by blanket bog and a swarm of drumlins located in the Knock-Knockarasser-Gortgar area. The word Bog is derived from the Irish word Bogach (meaning soft) – a sensible choice of word to describe a landscape that consists of 95% water, the remaining make-up of peat being of rotted plants, pollen, dust etc. In favourable conditions, it can take 1,000 years to grow 1 metre of peat (approximately 1mm per year). Intact bogs, which are actively forming peat, play an important role in combating climate change by removing excess carbon dioxide from the air and placing it into long term storage (carbon sinks) for thousands of years. They purify water and reduce flooding by their capacity to absorb, hold and slowly release water.

The Knock-Knockarasser-Gortgar Drumlins are glacial landforms generally with an elongated teardrop-shaped hill composed of glacial debris e.g., boulders, sand and gravel deposited at the base of an ice sheet. The name derives from the Irish word Droiminn, meaning a little ridge. The drumlins in this area are generally orientated NNE-SSW indicating that the movement of ice, in this part of Connemara, was from the NNE to the SSW during the Last Glacial Maximum of the British and Irish Icesheet (25,000 years ago). More info at - www.moycullen.galwaycommunityheritage.org

Knock-Knockarasser-Gortgar Drumlin Swarm



The Knock-Knockarasser-Gortgar drumlin swarm viewed from the Knock River bridge on the L1320, looking southeastwards



Bogs on Moycullen to Spiddal Road. Pic Credit: Hazel Morrison

Ecology

Moycullen Bogs has been designated as a Natural Heritage Area under Site Code 002364 since 2005. It encompasses an extensive area of lowland blanket bog in an area of high landscape beauty. The site supports a diversity of habitats including large areas of intact blanket bog, wet heath, dry heath, alkaline fen and revegetating cutaway. In Europe this type of blanket bog is restricted to Ireland, Britain, Norway and Iceland. The main habitat on the site is blanket bog, usually dominated by Purple Moor-grass (*Molinia caerulea*), Cross-leaved Heath (*Erica tetralix*) and Ling Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*) but there are extensive pool systems found at Laughill. A number of the pools have islands supporting Ling Heather, Purple Moor-grass, Deergrass, Cross-leaved Heath and bog mosses. The rare and protected Slender Cottongrass (*Eriophorum gracile*) is found within the site at Tonabrocky. The site supports Red Grouse and several additional notable species of fauna including Irish Hare, Common Frog, Snipe, Curlew, Fox, Kestrel and Lapwing.

Heritage

Traditions and ways of life associated with bogs are deep rooted in our heritage. You may come across features showing our built heritage within the landscape on this trail such as a megalithic structure in Gort Uí Lochlainn (Leaba Diarmuid- Diarmuid's bed) or the horizontal wheeled water mill in Liathleithir or Loughil bridge-one of Maigh Cuilin's nine protected structures. Besides our built heritage, traditions and ways of life associated with bogs are deep rooted in our cultural heritage. Since the loss of our woodlands several centuries ago, and indeed up to recent times, bogs have been the main source of fuel for many rural communities such as Moycullen. During famine times, the bog and turf was the only source of income for many families – Thomas Colville Scott in his 1853 diary (subsequently published by Lilliput Press in 1995 as "Connemara After the Famine") wrote of meeting a man in Moycullen who remarked "had it not been for the blessed self turf, we wouldn't have been able to look our landlord in the face since the praties pleased to forsake us".



LEAVE NO TRACE PRINCIPLES

- Please adhere to this code in any trip to the outdoors.
- 1 Plan Ahead and Prepare
 - 2 Be Considerate of Others
 - 3 Respect Farm Animals and Wildlife
 - 4 Leave What You Find
 - 5 Dispose of Waste Properly

SAFETY AND COMFORT

- For your comfort please ensure you have:
- Good hiking footwear
 - Rain gear
 - Drinks

- Trail food**
- Carry a mobile phone
 - Take care near streams in flood
 - Take care crossing a mountain pass
 - Be aware the trail passes through remote countryside
 - Inform someone about your intended itinerary

IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY CALL 999

Your Safety is your own responsibility. No liability can be accepted by the producers of this walks programme, for any loss, injury or damage to or in respect of any property or persons in connection with these trails.



KEEP DOGS ON LEADS

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Facebook: [Moycullen Heritage](https://www.facebook.com/MoycullenHeritage)

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