

Blawhorn Moss

Location

West Lothian

EcoCo Management Zone

SNH Mosses

Lead Partner

Scottish Natural Heritage



Site Description

Blawhorn Moss is a large area of raised bog and blanket bog habitat in the central lowlands. It has been modified in the past through drainage and cutting, resulting in a drying-out of the surface of the bog and a consequent loss of key species.

What are we going to do?

SNH will be continuing to restore the integrity of the bog through a programme of ditch blocking and trench bunding. This will help to raise the water table, preventing water being lost through cracks in the peat and through artificial ditches and generally slowing the flow of water off the site. The techniques used have been trialled on other sites and have been demonstrated to be the most efficient and sustainable ways of restoring peat sites.

What will this achieve?

This work will restore hydrological connectivity across the moss, improving its ecological condition and coherence. By re-wetting the disturbed habitats, a higher water table will be created, benefiting a range of rare bog species and reducing the density of invasive scrub and trees. In time, a more sustainable, natural habitat will be restored

Links

www.nnr-scotland.org.uk

<http://gateway.snh.gov.uk/sitelink>

www.ecocolife.org.uk

What is ecological coherence?

The project has adopted an adapted version of a definition proposed by R. Catchpole (2013).

At the scale of the whole network, coherence is achieved when: the full range of variation in valued features is represented; replication of specific features occurs at different sites over a wide geographic area; dispersal, migration and genetic exchange of individuals is possible between relevant sites; all critical areas for rare, highly threatened and endemic species are included; and the network is resilient to disturbance or damage caused by natural and anthropogenic factors.

In order to determine ecological coherence for the project sites the main measurable parameters being considered are; patch size, biological diversity, habitat structural and functional connectivity, ecological functionality and presence of endangered, rare or endemic species.

In essence this can be summarised for habitats as **'more, bigger, better, and better connected'**.

Learn more at "Ecological Coherence Definitions in Policy and Practice - Final Report". R. Catchpole, Aspen International. Contract report to Scottish Natural Heritage, No. 41102

