

## TIPPERARY - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

<b>NAME OF SITE</b>	<b>Galtee Mountains</b>		
Other names used for site	<i>Sliabh na nGaibhlte</i>		
<b>IGH THEME</b>	<b>IGH7 Quaternary</b>		
<b>TOWNLAND(S)</b>	<b>Glencoshabinnia, Stonepark, Rossbog, Rossadrehid, Curraghavokey, Ardane, Bohernarnane, Cloheennafishoge, Boolykennedy, Poulavala, Glengarra, Ballyharrow, Toor Beg, Cullenagh, Coolagarranroe, Skeheenaranky</b>		
<b>NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE</b>	<b>Rossadrehid, Lissvarrinane</b>		
<b>SIX INCH MAP NUMBER</b>	<b>73, 74, 80</b>		
<b>ITM CO-ORDINATES</b>	<b>587790E 623835N (Galtymore peak)</b>		
<b>1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>GSI BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO.</b>	<b>18, 22</b>

### Outline Site Description

The Galtee Mountains site comprises a high mountain range in southwest County Tipperary, extending in to southeast County Limerick.

### Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

The mountains have been shaped and moulded during the Quaternary (Ice Age) by glacier ice abrading the mountain tops and flanks. The mountains therefore comprise ice-scoured bedrock, which itself is Devonian Old Red Sandstone.

### Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

The Galtees are Ireland's highest inland mountains, and the summit of the range is covered by a few metres depth of blanket peat, which has formed across the summit since the Ice Age. This peat has been cutover and eroded in places and displays high peat hags in some localities, particularly on the southern shoulder of Galtymore. The Devonian sandstones and conglomerates, which make up the Galtees, are also well displayed at outcrop localities. It is known that the sandstone bedrock at the top of Galtymore, as well as much of it across the highest Galtee ridge, poked through the glacier ice during the last ice age, as a nunatak.

A number of deep corries occur across the top of the ridge, comprising deep, wide hollows which are sometimes over a kilometre wide. These include discrete as well as composite corrie features. Many hold tarns (corrie lakes, *e.g.* Lough Muskry, Borheen Lough) and also show excellent examples of lateral and corrie-edge recessional moraines. The moraines are often strewn with very large erratic boulders, dropped from the ice and weighing several hundred tonnes in some cases.

The features have almost-vertical back walls, with the highest over 300 m in vertical height. Beautiful waterfalls cascade down many of these back walls. Slievecushabinnia and Galtymore are flanked by fine arête ridges, which are very jagged, sometimes knife-edged, craggy rock walls, which separate two corrie features.

### Site Importance – County Geological Site; recommended for Geological NHA

The highest mountains provide an excellent corrie landscape within a relatively restricted (60 square kilometres) extent. The range is already a pNHA and SAC (Site 000646) for biodiversity reasons and the landscape of mountain glaciations is also of national importance.

### Management/promotion issues

Access to the mountains is restricted to hillwalkers and climbers, as there is no road access. Some signboard explaining the glacial history and importance of the mountains would prove worthwhile, potentially at the Galtee Castle Wood walking trailhead, or some of the other trailheads to the mountains.



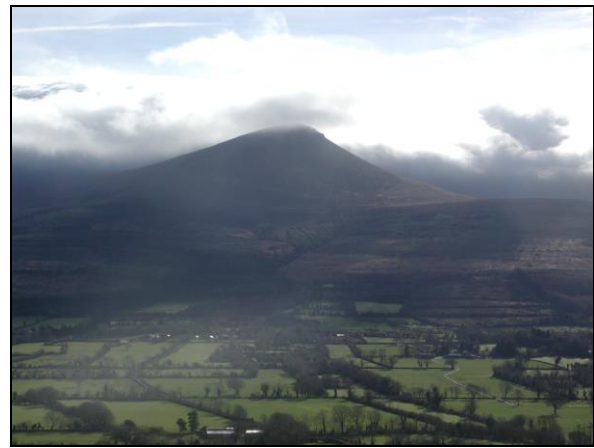
The Galtee Mountains, viewed from the south near Burncourt.



The high mountains, looking west to Galtymore from Greenane.



Lough Muskry, from Greenane.



Cloud covering Cush Mountain; viewed across the Glen of Aherlow, from the north.

