



## wildlife and flora in the parklands

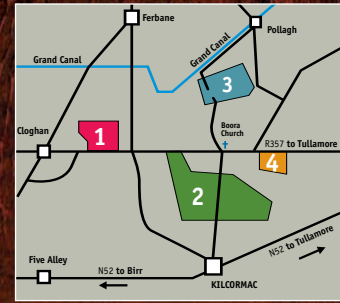
There are over 130 species of birds recorded in the various habitats of the Parklands. These include spectacular numbers of Whooper swans, Golden plover, Lapwings and Starlings, that can be seen on the grasslands and wetlands during the winter. The last remaining population of native Grey partridge in Ireland are found in the Lough Boora Parklands area. The National Parks and Wildlife Service are now funding a management and conservation project for this species so as to preserve this population and increase its numbers again. All areas of the Parklands are preserved and no shooting is allowed.

One can view an abundance of flora in the Parklands throughout the seasons. These range from the yellow furze in the spring to bog cottons and orchids in the summer. These are followed by the purple willowherbs and heathers in the autumn and the Parklands turn to a golden glow of wild grasses in the winter. There are many fauna to be seen, especially great numbers of hares in the spring and early summer. There are rich displays of wild mushrooms in the woodland, grassland, bogland and wild meadow habitats of the Parklands in the autumn

## the areas in the parklands

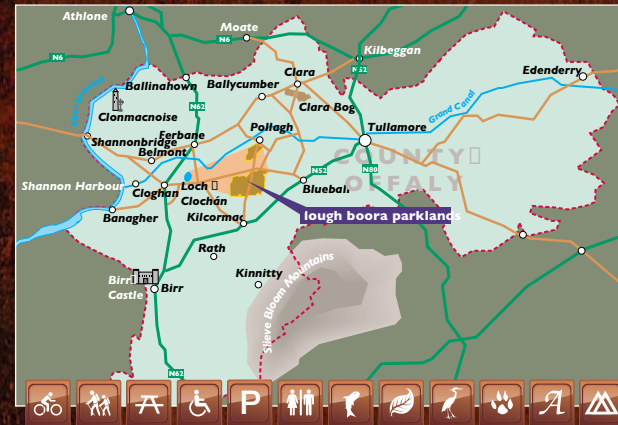
Lough Boora Parklands now consists of four distinct areas:

1. Loch Clochán
2. Lough Boora
3. Tuarraun Wetlands
4. Finnamores



## how to get to lough boora

Lough Boora Parklands is centrally located to all the main attractions in County Offaly and the Midlands.



## other attractions in the area

Slieve Bloom Environmental Park	8 miles (13km) south
Birr Castle	13 miles (20km) south west
Clonmacnoise	14 miles (21km) north west
Clara Bog	10 miles (16km) north east
Tullamore Dew Heritage Centre	12 miles (19km) north east
Grand Canal and the "Offaly Way"	Adjacent to site



*lough boora parklands*

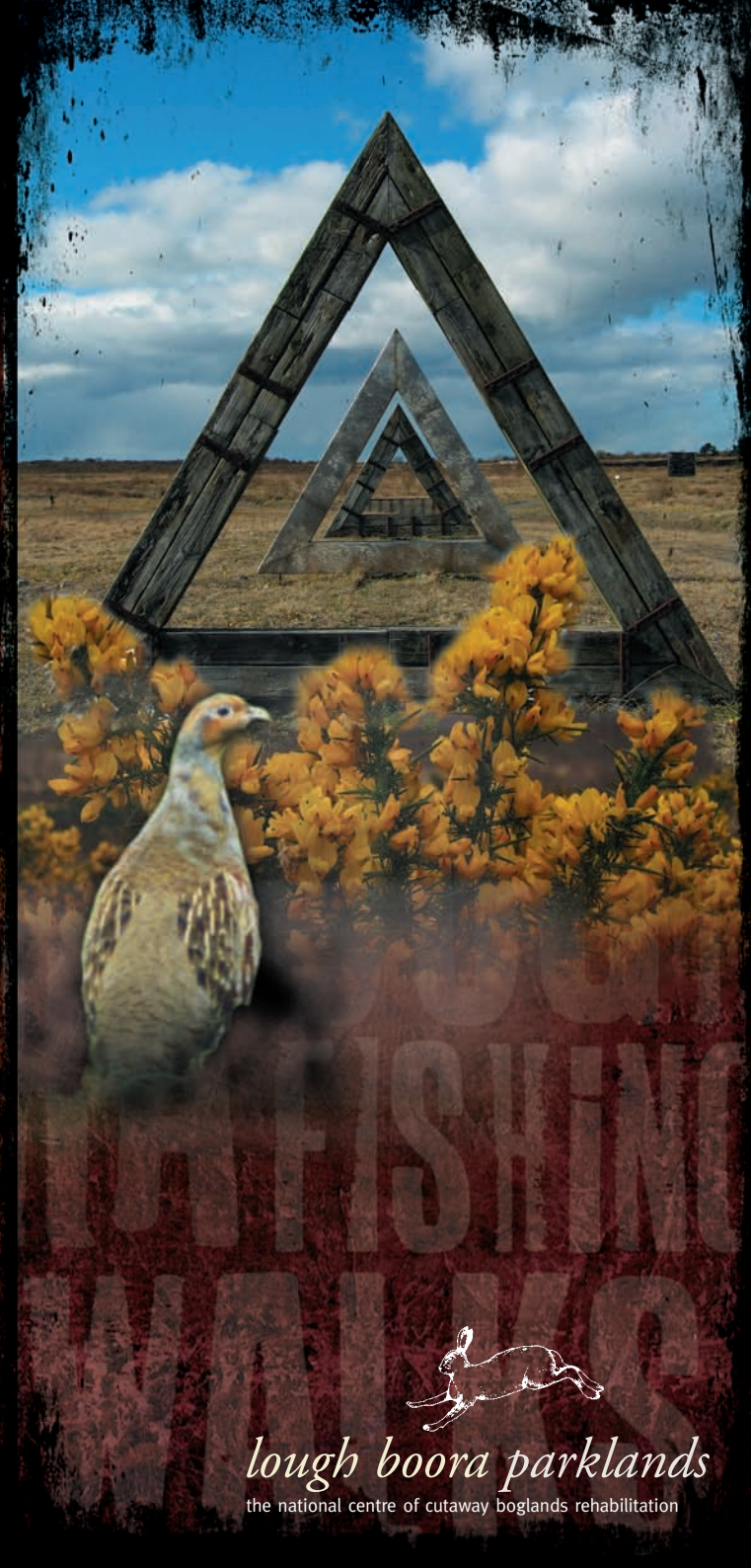
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BORD NA MÓNA

West Offaly COMMUNITIES TO Partnership DEVELOPMENT

SHANNON DEVELOPMENT

Design and Print: Brosna Press 090 6454327. Photography: Tom Egan



*lough boora parklands*

the national centre of cutaway boglands rehabilitation



## welcome

There's a beautiful new landscape at the centre of Ireland - a paradise for outdoor enthusiasts, which until now has been an unshared secret. Through a creative combination of nature and the human hand new habitats are emerging on the cutaway bogs of Co. Offaly. Lands cloaked with great raised bogs for 10,000 years are at the dawn of a new era. Bogs harvested by Bord na Móna for energy since the 1940s are establishing as unique and welcoming habitats for a wide range of flora and fauna.

## sculpture in the parklands

In 2000 Tullamore artist Kevin O'Dwyer and Tom Egan from Bord na Móna organised an International Sculpture symposium in Lough Boora Parklands. This resulted in seven permanent sculptures being located in the Park and is now complemented by new pieces. There are now 20 outdoor sculptures on display of a permanent and temporary nature.



## lough boora parkland walks

Lough Boora Parkland Walks consist of three main walks with an entire perimeter length of approximately 20km with a walking time of four hours. These are the Farmlands Walk, Mesolithic Walk and the Sculpture Walk. Each of these are comprised of a series of loops. Walkers can choose to do the entire length of the walk or just complete one of the shorter loops as suits.

## cycle paths

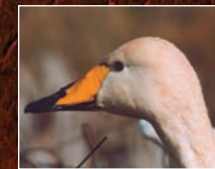
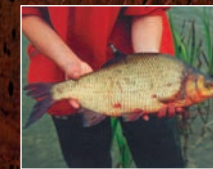
Two new cycle paths in Lough Boora Parklands offer up to 14 kilometers of scenic cycle routes. There is a car free cycle path with a tarred surface that offers approximately 9km of track for everyone including children to enjoy. It is a very peaceful route that allows cyclists to discover the flora & fauna, the sculptures, the mesolithic site, forestry, farmland and open areas of cut-away bog alongside the boora canal. A second circular route goes along the Boora Road and the Farm Road and is approximately five kilometers long.

## mesolithic site

A very important archeological site in Irish history is located at the western extremity of the Mesolithic Walkway. This site was brought to the attention of the archaeologist by two former employees, the late Kieran Egan and the late Joe Craven, and it was subsequently excavated by Dr Michael Ryan. The artefacts discovered were carbon dated to 6800 - 7000 BC and it is the oldest recorded site of human activity in Ireland. There is an information board prepared by Dr. John Feehan at the site.



Stone Axe Heads from Lough Boora



## angling at lough boora

There are 5 angling lakes for coarse and game fishing located in the Parklands. The coarse lakes at Finnamoses and Boora are stocked with carp, tench, bream and rudd. Loch Clochán near Cloghan is stocked with trout. Anglers are welcome to fish these lakes and are asked to obey the rules requiring the return of all coarse fish to the lakes. Fly fishing is permitted under club rules at Loch Clochán. Other activities include a model aeroplane club and a rifle range.

Loch an Dochais has special facilities for anglers with disabilities and each year in May it hosts the All Ireland Angling Competition for these anglers. This is organised by the Kilcormac Development Association. A special looped walkway around Boora Lake is now tarred so as to cater for all walkers and this walkway provides an elevated view of the sculpture park. There is also *access-for-all* fishing stands at both the upper & lower Finnamoses Lakes.

## picnics at lough boora

Lough Boora Parklands offers the ideal location for picnics. A number of facilities such as picnic benches, restrooms and parking are available.

