

This week on Radio Nova we’re chatting about the importance of peatlands.

**The Importance of Blanket Bogs**

* Blanket bogs are valuable wetlands, not wastelands. There are a number of scientific, economic, cultural and moral reasons for conserving blanket bogs.
* Only a small amount of blanket bog exists in the world. Ireland possesses 8% of the world’s blanket bog and is the most important country in Europe for this type of habitat.
* Blanket bog landscapes provide a refuge for a rich biodiversity of species including several rare plants, birds and invertebrate species.
* Blanket bogs are commonly used as rough grazing land for sheep and cattle, grouse shooting, deer stalking and fishing.
* Blanket bogs preserve prehistoric farming landscapes beneath the peat as well as a diverse range of artefacts within the peat mass.
* The patterns of pools on the flatter areas of blanket bog is of particular conservation significance. The pools support a specialised range of mosses and plants and they provide essential feeding habitats for wetland birds.
* Within their peat layers, blanket bogs preserve a record of their own growth and development and on a larger scale, they provide insights into regional vegetation change, climate change, atmospheric pollution and act as chronometers for other events such as volcanic eruptions.
* Blanket bogs accumulate and store millions of tonnes of carbon and have a vital function in controlling the green house gases that cause climate change.
* Blanket bogs contain in excess of 90% water and act as vast water reservoirs. They have a vital role to play in the management of water within river catchments.
* Blanket bogs and their utilisation for recreation can have positive benefits on the health of people.

**Links for more information:**

[www.tobin.ie/the-importance-of-irelands-blanket-bogs/](http://www.tobin.ie/the-importance-of-irelands-blanket-bogs/)

[www.naturacommunities.ie/importance-of-bogs/](http://www.naturacommunities.ie/importance-of-bogs/)

[www.communitywetlandsforum.ie](http://www.communitywetlandsforum.ie)

[www.gaelicwoodlandproject.com](http://www.gaelicwoodlandproject.com)

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