SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: BALLYDUFF WOOD

SITE CODE: 001777

This is a small area of Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) woodland on glacial drift to the east of the Tullamore-Clara road 6.5km north of Tullamore. Younger Beech trees, approximately 6m in height, are located around the south-western end together with some Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) and Hazel (*Corylus avellana*). Inside the marginal belt is the older woodland primarily composed of Beech and Hazel. Some Hazel trees reach a height of 9m.

The undergrowth is fairly dense with such species as Common Nettle (*Urtica dioica*) and Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.) in the more open parts, and Ivy (*Hedera helix*) and a moss carpet under the tree canopy.

The woodland is situated on an esker ridge and patches of typical grassland communities can be seen alongside the road. The main grasses are Red Fescue (*Festuca rubra*), Quaking-grass (*Briza media*) and Downy Oat-grass (*Helictotrichon pubescens*).

Although unnatural in origin, this woodland is regaining a more natural composition through regeneration. The abundance of Spindle (*Euonymus europaeus*) is of particular note. The site is further enhanced by areas of herb-rich grassland.

26.11.2009