SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: KILGLASS AND GRANGE LOUGHS

SITE CODE: 000608

Kilglass and Grange Lougha (Roscommon) are a group of lakes in the River Shannon catchment, joined to the main river by a short channel into Lough Boderg 6km west of Dromod, Co. Leitrim. They are characterised by extensive areas of reed-swamps narrowing the lakes and cutting off smaller ones. Lough Kilglass in particular is very calcareous with a sandy shoreline (at least in part) and is separated from Grange Lough by a long cut through infilling marsh. They are the lowest points of the two main tributaries of the Shannon in Roscommon - the Scramogue and Owenur Rivers. They are also situated on what is considered to be the pre-Ice Age course of the River Shannon.

The Loughs were briefly visited in 1993. In addition to the reed-swamps and associated freshwater marshes, an extensive area of very wet grassland on peat was visited (2km south of the bridge at Carranadoe). It consisted of plant species as Star Sedge (*Carex echinata*) and Ragged-Robin (*Lychnis flos-cuculi*) with large patches of Greater Tussock-sedge (*Carex paniculata*) and scattered willows (*Salix* spp.) which in places become wet woodland and scrubland. Some isolated stretches of shoreline are said to be very botanically rich, throughout the lakes.

The mean of peak counts of winter waterfowl at Kilglass Lough (1984-1987) recorded Mute Swan 3, Greenland White-fronted Goose 99, Wigeon 186, Teal 210, Tufted Duck 193, Goldeneye 40, Golden Plover 83 and Lapwing 243. This is a very high density for a relatively small lake. These lakes are also part of a group of Roscommon lakes which between them have nationally important numbers of winter waterfowl and movement between lakes. In 1974 a varied group of breeding birds was reported.

There is an exceptional abundance of the invertebrate *Corixa fallenoides*, a type of Water Boatman peculiar to Central and Western Ireland, and the likelihood of other invertebrates of restricted distribution (reported in 1974).

Kilglass and Grange Loughs have an unusual ecological and geomorphological position in relation to the main Shannon lakes. There are extensive areas of remote reed-beds. Kilglass Lough has high numbers of varied winter waterfowl, unusual for a relatively small sized, calcareous lake.

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