SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: LOUGH O'GRADY

SITE CODE: 001019

Lough O'Grady is a medium sized lake situated about 3km south-west of Scarriff in Co. Clare. Keel Lough, a small lake north-west of O'Grady, is part of the site. The River Graney flows into the lake at the west end, while the River Scarriff flows out at the eastern side.

The fringing vegetation is sparse but diverse. There are few emergent plants and only small pockets of Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*), mainly at the south-east and north-east shore. Wet woodland occurs at the western end and side and is mainly willow (*Salix* spp.) and Downy Birch (*Betula pubescens*). A variety of wet grassland, which in places grades into freshwater marsh, occurs around the lake. There is a good diversity of plants, with sedges (*Carex* spp.) and Soft Rush (*Juncus effusus*) dominant in places, along with such species as Meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*), Cuckooflower (*Cardamine pratensis*), and Devil's-bit Scabious (*Succisa pratensis*). The drier areas of grass are less species rich and are dominated by grasses and rushes. Island O'Grady near the southern shore is mainly improved pasture and is well grazed.

The lake is an important wildfowl site with regionally significant populations of Wigeon, Teal, Mallard and Lapwing. Greenland White-fronted Geese regularly visit the site and use Island O'Grady as a roost.

The lake is a popular angling site and is also shot over during winter. Cattle and horses graze in the area. There are some signs of agricultural improvement around the lake, mostly scrub clearance, drain-clearance and fertilisation.

The main interest of this site is as a waterfowl site, especially for Greenland White-fronted Geese. However, there is also a good diversity of habitats ranging from open water to wet grassland/marsh and wet woodland and scrub. There has been relatively little damage to the site.

16.11.2009