SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: KILBARRY BOG

SITE CODE: 001700

Kilbarry Bog is located on the southern outskirts of Waterford City; it lies on either side of the former Great Southern Railway Line parts of which today are used as a foot path and cycle way. The site is drained by the St John's River in the north, whilst there is a flow of water into the site from the hills to the south-east. This wetland is not, in fact, a bog in the true sense, but rather comprises an area of reed swamp, freshwater marsh, wet grassland and scrub. Parts of the site are known as Ballynakill Marsh.

Over the years the wetland has been reduced in extent by municipal rubbish dumping and subsequent reclamation to the north. The present site includes areas of reed swamp that are dominated by Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*) and with an abundance of Greater Pond-sedge (*Carex riparia*) and Lesser Pond-sedge (*C. acutiformis*). Bushes of Eared Willow (*Salix aurita*) and Rusty Willow (*Salix cinerea* subsp. o*leifolia*) are scattered about the site. Other plant species present include Meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*), Common Valerian (*Valeriana officinalis*) and Tufted Hair-grass (*Deschampsia cespitosa*).

Around the swamp margins the vegetation grades into marsh and then to wet grassland; here, such species as Bottle Sedge (*Carex rostrata*), Brown Sedge (*Carex disticha*), Creeping Bent (*Agrostis stolonifera*), Soft Rush (*Juncus effusus*), Yellow Iris (*Iris pseudacorus*), Tall Fescue (*Festuca arundinacea*) and Royal Fern (*Osmunda regalis*) are found.

Summer Snowflake (*Leucojum aestivum*), a scarce species in Ireland, was first recorded from the site in 1900, and was present here at least as recently as 1979.

The site is used by Otter, a protected species in Ireland and one that is listed on Annex II of the E.U. Habitats Directive.

The site supports a good diversity of bird species associated with swamp vegetation. Those found throughout the year include Mallard, Water Rail, Moorhen, Grey Heron, Snipe, Reed Bunting and Grey Wagtail. In summer the site also supports important populations of migrant species, including Sedge Warbler, Reed Warbler, Willow Warbler, Chiffchaff, Whitethroat and Blackcap. Most, if not all, of these species breed at the site; the breeding population of Reed Warbler is of particular significance. This species was proved to be breeding at the site in 1999 (five pairs), the first breeding record for Co. Waterford. This is a scarce species in Ireland and Kilbarry Bog supports between 5% and 10% of the national breeding population. Other species using the site in late summer/autumn include Swallow, House Martin, Swift, Sand Martin and Starling, while in winter the site is visited by Lapwing, Black-headed Gull, Jack Snipe, Pied Wagtail and additional numbers of Mallard.

Kingfisher, a species that is listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive, has also been recorded from the site.

A range of interesting and often scarce invertebrate species has been recorded from the site. These include dragonflies, butterflies, moths and spiders.

Kilbarry Bog is a site of conservation importance for a variety of reasons: it is the only remaining wetland of its type of significance in the vicinity of Waterford City, it supports a variety of wetland vegetation types and plant species, it is the site of records for the scarce Summer Snowflake, it supports a good diversity of birds, including an important breeding population of Reed Warbler and a range of scarce invertebrate species has been recorded from the site.

25.11.2009