SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: LOUGH BAWN

SITE CODE: 001819

Lough Bawn is a relatively small site composed of raised bog, fen, wet and dry woodland and freshwater marsh habitats situated 2km west of Keenagh in Co. Longford. It is the area of fen however that gives this site its primary scientific interest.

The area of fen/freshwater marsh is now to be found in a region originally occupied by the open waters of Lough Bawn. The water table has dropped considerably however and now one finds sedge-dominated vegetation covering the greater proportion of the former lake. The fen habitat itself is still quite wet and it is not unusual to find standing water up to a depth of 50cm. Sedges such as Lesser Tussock-sedge (*Carex diandra*), Bottle Sedge (*Carex rostrata*) and Greater Tussock-sedge (*Carex paniculata*) are well represented throughout this community. Areas of open water are still to be found here and one encounters species such as Bulrush (*Typha latifolia*), Water Horsetail (*Equisetum fluviatile*) and Bottle Sedge.

The intact raised bog on the site is interesting in that, although quite dry, Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*) isn't very well developed here. The bog surface may be burnt occasionally and it is noteworthy that all the adjacent and surrounding bog has been drained, cut over or planted with conifers. The habitat diversity of the site is augmented by the presence of small areas of both wet and dry woodland. Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*), Downy Birch (*Betula pubescens*) and willows (*Salix* spp.) are all to be found here.

Little information is available on the birdlife at this site but Snipe, Curlew, Lapwing and Pheasant were all observed during this visit. Any further drainage and/or peat extraction should be discouraged if the wetland habitat is to be maintained at Lough Bawn.

26.11.2009