SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: LIFFEY VALLEY MEANDER BELT

SITE CODE: 000393

This site is located on the north bank of the River Liffey, about 1km west of Ballymore Eustace in Co. Kildare. In this area the Liffey meanders through a broad flood plain bordered in places by steep slopes.

The site, which was surveyed in 1975, is an Ash wood which runs down from the road. Apart from Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) the tree species include Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), Elder (*Sambucus nigra*) and Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*). The woodland is grazed but includes the following herbs – Sanicle (*Sanicula europaea*), Pignut (*Conopodium majus*), Bugle (*Ajuga reptans*), Red Campion (*Silene dioica*), Wood Speedwell (*Veronica montana*), False Brome (*Brachypodium sylvaticum*) and Remote Sedge (*Carex remota*).

A calcicolous seepage line along the base of the slope is included within the site. The Ash wood merges into a dense growth of Lesser Pond-sedge (*Carex acutiformis*), which grows with Marsh-marigold (*Caltha palustris*), Yellow Iris (*Iris pseudacorus*), Meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*), Golden-saxifrage (*Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*), and the rushes (*Juncus effusus* and *J. inflexus*).

Important chironomid communities have been recorded from this area. This site is of scientific interest as Ash woods and marshy areas of this type are rare in Co Kildare.

6.11.2009