SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: LOUGH ALICK

SITE CODE: 001527

Lough Alick is a small lake, situated in low lying farmland 5km south-west of Ballina. The lake drains directly into the River Moy. The lake is calcareous, with some marl accumulations on its bed.

Along the edges of the lake there is a rich orchid flora - Marsh Helleborine (*Epipactis palustris*) is especially common, with Fragrant Orchid (*Gymnadenia conopsea*), Heath Spotted-orchid (*Dactylorhiza maculata*) and marsh-orchids (*Dactylorhiza incarnata* and *D. majalis* spp. *purpurella*) also present.

Creeping Willow (*Salix repens*) is also found, as is Marsh Lousewort (*Pedicularis palustris*), Knotted Pearlwort (*Sagina nodosa*) and Marsh Yellow-cress (*Rorippa palustris*).

The site also supports a good diversity of emergent and floating vegetation on the lake shore. Blunt-Flowered Rush (*Juncus subnodulosus*), Common Club-rush (*Schoenoplectus lacustris*), Black Bog-rush (*Schoenus nigricans*), Mare's-tail (*Hippuris vulgaris*), Water-plantain (*Alisma plantago-aquatica*) and sedges (*Carex rostrata* and *C. diandra*) are common.

Black-headed Gulls and Common Gulls nest in small numbers on the lake, and Snipe are frequent in the marsh.

There is also a freshwater mussel (*Anodonta* spp.) which occurs in the lake.

Although the margins of this site have been modified by recent land reclamation and drainage, it has a rich fen flora which is notable for its diversity of orchids.

23.11.2009