SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: DERRYVULLAGH ISLAND

SITE CODE: 001390

This site is located about 7km north of Athy. It is a low drift wooded island surrounded by extensive developed raised bog.

The island was formerly cultivated but is now wooded. The wood is mostly an even-aged stand of Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), Elder (*Sambucus nigra*) and Hazel (*Corylus avellana*), with a few trees of Wild Privet (*Ligustrum vulgare*). Some Ash trees (*Fraxinus excelsior*) overtop this canopy while at its edges Spindle (*Euonymus europaeus*) is prevalent with abundant Bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*), bramble (*Rubus* spp.) and Rosebay Willowherb (*Chamerion angustifolium*).

The Hawthorn-Blackthorn area is distinct from the Hazel stand and the ground flora differs. In the former place it is predominantly of Ivy (*Hedera helix*), with some Wood Avens (*Geum urbanum*), Lords-and-ladies (*Arum maculatum*) and Germander Speedwell (*Veronica chamaedrys*). In the lighter conditions below Hazel, the flora is richer, with the following species recorded – Ramsons (*Allium ursinum*), Primrose (*Primula vulgaris*), Lesser Celandine (*Ranunculus ficaria*), Wood Speedwell (*Veronica montana*), Wood Anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*), Barren Strawberry (*Potentilla sterilis*), Pignut (*Conopodium majus*), Wild Strawberry (*Fragaria vesca*) and Early Dog-violet (*Viola reichenbachiana*). In addition, Toothwort (*Lathraea squamaria*) is widespread on old Hazel.

The area of semi-natural woodland has spread beyond the original boundary identified by An Foras Forbatha in 1975.

Birdlife is rich with typical woodland passerine species, as well as Sparrowhawk and Long-eared Owl.

This site is of scientific interest as it is intact semi-natural deciduous woodland with a well-developed flora. Similar such habitats are rare in Co Kildare.

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