SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: CLOONBOORHY LOUGH

SITE CODE: 001486

Cloonboorhy Lough is located just south west of Thomastown village (8km south of Belcarra) in Co. Mayo. This lake is a fine example of an oligotrophic marl lake, typical of the region. The lake is surrounded by extensive reed-beds, as well as Black Bog-rush (*Schoenus nigricans*) marsh, wet sedge marsh and lake floodplain pasture. The site shows the different gradations from pasture to marsh to lake vegetation. The uncommon Least Bur-reed (*Sparganium minimum*), Whorled Water-milfoil (*Myriophyllum verticillatum*), Long-stalked Pondweed (*Potamogeton praelongus*) and Slender Sedge (*Carex lasiocarpa*) occur along the reed-beds surrounding the lake. The habitats here are species-rich and well developed. The lake is also important for birds and as a spawning and feeding area for perch and pike.

Marl Lakes are relatively rare in Western Europe and decreasing rapidly due to eutrophication.

Cloonboorhy Lough is naturally more eutrophic than its near neighbour Lough Carra and forms an interesting contrast to it in terms of its ecology. It contains several species e.g. Whorled Water-milfoil, which appear to be excluded from Lough Carra due to the extreme marl-depositing conditions which occur there.

23.11.2009