SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: ARDAMADANE WOOD

SITE CODE: 001799

Ardamadane Wood is located north of Blarney village, 6km north-west of Cork City. It is situated along the banks of the River Martin. The site is bounded in parts by the river, the old Blarney-Mallow road and on the eastern side by an embankment and the new Cork road. This site comprises mainly dry deciduous woodland of Sessile Oak (*Quercus petraea*) and Downy Birch (*Betula pubescens*) with some scrub woodland and improved agricultural grassland. Threats to this particular site include eutrophication of the river from fertiliser run off and litter/domestic rubbish dumping in the woodland adjacent to roads.

The following description is compiled from the An Foras Forbatha (1972) report for three sites around Blarney - Ardamadare Woods (001799) north of the village and two sites to the south - Blarney Castle Woods (001039) and Blarney Lake (001798). Together they encompass some 53ha.

The woodland at Blarney has a rich soil due to the influence of the nearby limestone and is able to support a wide variety of plants and animals. Blarney Castle Woods comprises old estate woodland with Sessile Oak, Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) and Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*). Ardamadane Wood consists of a patch of scrub with Hazel (*Corylus avellana*) and Ash and a linear Sessile Oak and Downy Birch wood stretching northwards along the River Martin towards Waterloo (the river is also included in this site). The Blarney Lake site includes the artificial lake near the Castle.

The base-rich woodland of Blarney Castle Wood is probably the most interesting site botanically, with a species-rich ground flora. Species include Pignut (*Conopodium majus*), Sanicle (*Sanicula europaea*), Garlic Mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*), Goldilocks Buttercup (*Ranunculus auricomus*) and the violets - Common Dog-violet (*Viola riviniana*) and Early Dog-violet (*V. reichenbachiana*). The two parasitic species Ivy Broomrape (*Orobanche hederae*) and Toothwort (*Lathraea squamaria*) are found occasionally, usually in places with deeper soils, while the rocky areas support the growth of wood Melic (*Melica uniflora*) and Bearded Couch (*Elymus caninus*).

The flora of Ardamadane Wood is not as species-rich and includes species of more acid conditions such as Great Wood-rush (*Luzula sylvatica*). The three sites are of some importance to birds with Woodcock using the area in winter and a variety of species breeding in the area.

Near the river and lake the aquatic communities include beds of sedges (e.g. Greater Pond-sedge (*Carex riparia*), Bladder-sedge (*C. vesicaria*), Smooth-stalked Sedge (*C. laevigata*) and Great Fen-sedge (*Cladium mariscus*) and stands of tall herbs such as Meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*), Great Willowherb (*Epilobium hirsutum*) and Hemp-agrimony (*Eupatorium cannabinum*). At the rivers edge are found Nodding

Bur-marigold (*Bidens cernua*), Blue Water-speedwell (*Veronica anagallis-aquatica*) and mints (*Mentha* spp.).

Threats to the survival of these sites include coniferous afforestation of the woodland communities and the encroachment of agricultural activity *e.g.* grazing pressures, clear felling and agricultural improvement. Where possible, management agreements should be made with the landowners.

As a whole, the three sites compose a caved area including interesting aquatic and terrestrial habitats. The base-rich woodland (Blarney Castle Woods) is an example of a type not widely found in Cork County, where acid upland woods are more common. The sites are all easily accessible and close to Cork City and they could therefore form a useful environmental education resource within the area.

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