SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: LOUGH GLORE

SITE CODE: 000686

This lake is situated about 3km north-east of Castlepollard in Co. Westmeath. It is a shallow, calcareous and highly productive lake.

The open water has been colonised by Canadian Waterweed (*Elodea canadensis*), Mare's-tail (*Hippuris vulgaris*), duckweeds (*Lemna minor* and *L.trisulca*), Whorled Water-milfoil (*Myriophyllum verticillatum*), starwort (*Callitriche* spp.) and the moss *Fontinalis antipyretica*. Rigid Hornwort (*Ceratophyllum demersum*) was abundant at the time of the survey and extensive mats covered the water surface.

All around the lake but particularly at the southern end, extensive stands of Reed Canary-grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*) and Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*) are present. Lakewards of these, on reasonably firm substrate, Branched Bur-reed (*Sparganium erectum*), Water-cress (*Nasturtium officinale*), Water Horsetail (*Equisetum fluviatile*), Bulrush (*Typha latifolia*), Bottle Sedge (*Carex rostrata*) and Common Club-rush (*Schoenoplectus lacustris*) occur.

Other areas of reed-bed have scattered willow (*Salix* spp.), Downy Birch (*Betula pubescens*) and Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*). In places, flushed lakeshore vegetation can be seen including Purple Moor-grass (*Molinia caerulea*), cottongrass (*Eriophorum* spp.), Black Bog-rush (*Schoenus nigricans*), Grass-of-parnassus (*Parnassia palustris*), Devil's-bit Scabious (*Succisa pratensis*), Marsh Cinquefoil (*Potentilla palustris*) and orchids. In peaty regions stoneworts (*Chara* spp.) can be observed in bog holes left from turf cutting.

At the north-east of the site on an area of former cutaway is a stand of birch wood (*Betula* spp.) with some other scrub species including Rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*). Patches of Common Reed are also seen.

The birdlife of this small lake includes Pochard, Great-crested Grebe, Grebe, Tufted Duck, Ringed Plover, Grey Heron, Coot, Water Rail and Teal. The surrounding wetlands are used by Snipe, Lapwing, Curlew, Reed Bunting and Kestrel species. The mammals frequenting the site include hare and Otter. The latter is listed in Annex II of the EU Habitats Directive as it is threatened within the European Union.

Much of the lakeshore is accessible to grazing cattle. Other land use includes fishing and bird shooting. In past times the Inny Drainage Scheme lowered the level of this lake. Presently, further drainage of the Inny is occurring and is a threat to the site quality.

Lough Glore is important as a very productive midland limestone lake. The open water and surrounding lakeshore support a vast range of aquatic vegetation, insect life

and birdlife. The use of the site by mammal species such as Otter is an added bonus to the ecological quality.

11.11.2009