SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: KILLOUGHRUM FOREST

SITE CODE: 000765

Killoughrum Forest is located in the Urrin River valley, about 8km upstream of its confluence with the River Slaney near Enniscorthy.

The wood, which is primarily Downy Birch (*Betula pubescens*), oak (*Quercus* spp.), Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) and Hazel (*Corylus avellana*), forms a fairly even aged stand and may have been clear-felled in the recent past. The ground flora is relatively poor because of the stony, acid soil and shading from young trees. Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) is the most common species, with Wood Sage (*Teucrium scorodonia*), Great Wood-rush (*Luzula sylvatica*), Hard Fern (*Blechnum spicant*) and Bilberry (*Vaccinium myrtillus*). Ivy (*Hedera helix*) and Honeysuckle (*Lonicera periclymenum*) also occur.

Areas of wet woodland, found along the stream that flows from west to east through the site, have Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*), Downy Birch, Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), Rusty Willow (*Salix cinerea* subsp. *oleifolia*), oak and Rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*), with a richer ground flora including Wood Horsetail (*Equisetum sylvaticum*), Wild Angelica (*Angelica sylvestris*), Greater Tussock-sedge (*Carex paniculata*), Hemlock Water-dropwort (*Oenanthe crocata*), Lesser Spearwort (*Ranunculus flammula*) and Common Valerian (*Valeriana officinalis*). Narrow-leaved Helleborine (*Cephalanthera longifolia*) occurs amongst this wet woodland by the stream. This orchid is listed as vulnerable and threatened in the Irish Red Data Book and is protected under the Flora (Protection) Order, 1999.

Heath vegetation occurs in places where tree cover is thin, with species such as Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*), Bilberry, Western Gorse (*Ulex gallii*) and Goldenrod (*Solidago virgaurea*). The rare and threatened Greater Broomrape (*Orobanche rapum-genistae*), a species listed in the Irish Red Data Book, was formerly abundant amongst this type of vegetation and may still occur at the site.

Although parts of the wood have recently been clear-felled and reclaimed for agriculture, Killoughrum Forest is a valuable habitat in a county that is sparsely wooded. The presence of Narrow-leaved Helleborine and the possible occurrence of Greater Broomrape add botanical importance to the site.

12.11.2009