SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: GARADICE LOUGH WOOD

SITE CODE: 001413

Garadice Lough Wood is located 8km east of Ballinamore, just south of the Ballyconnell Road in Co. Leitrim. It is situated on the north-eastern shore of Garadice Lough (an important coarse fish water) on a drumlin promontory. A shingle beach occurs between the wood and the lough.

The main habitat consists of oak (*Quercus* spp.) woodland and two main communities occur. Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*) dominates the eastern side which has the richest flora. Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), Hazel (*Corylus avellana*) and Downy Birch (*Betula pubescens*) are present with much Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*). The rich ground flora contains Bugle (*Ajuga reptans*), Golden-saxifrage (*Chrysosplenium oppositfolium*), Wood-sorrel (*Oxalis acetosella*) and Enchanter's-nightshade (*Circaea lutetiana*). Willows (*Salix cinerea, S. aurita*) and Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) occur near the lake shore.

The western side has more acidic pools of soil and a mountain oakwood community with Sessile Oak (*Quercus petraea*) occurs. The ground flora includes Hay-scented Buckler-fern (Dryoptens aemula), Wilson's Filmy-fern (*Hymenophyllum wilsonii*) and the mosses *Dicranum majus* and *Plagiothecium undulatum*. Great Wood-rush (Luzula sylvatica), Bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*), Bilberry (*Vaccinum myrtillus*) and Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*) occur also.

Some scrub and rough pasture is present on the site. Unusual plants which occur on this site are Red Campion (*Silene dioica*), Wood Speedwell (*Veronica montana*), Early Dog-violet (*Viola reichenbachiana*) and *Plagiothecium latebricola*, a moss which has not been recorded anywhere else in the country.

Grazing and agricultural improvement are reducing the scientific value of the site. Anglers and campers use the site and cause damage with litter and fires. Tree felling and grazing are the major threats which will prevent regeneration in the woodland.

Native oak woodlands are rare in Ireland and this site with two quite distinct oak communities is a site of high scientific interest and so should be designated an NHA.

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