SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: ANNAGH LOUGH (BALLYCONNELL)

SITE CODE: 000974

This is a base-rich lake with a small peat bog beside it situated east of Ballyconnell in Co. Cavan. This contrast is responsible for a rich flora and insect life. On the north side of the lake-semi-natural deciduous woodland occurs with willow (*Salix* spp.), birch (*Betula* spp.), Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*), Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and oak (*Quercus* spp.). This thins out by the shore where such plant species as Tufted Hair-grass (*Deschampsia cespitosa*), Yellow Loosestrife (*Lysimachia vulgaris*) and Greater Tussock-sedge (*Carex paniculata*) become common.

The rest of the shore is low lying, either covered by reed swamp or occasionally a stony beach. Extensive stands of Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*), Common Club-rush (*Schoenoplectus lacustris*) and sedges (especially Bottle Sedge (*Carex rostrata*)), occur and are used by wildfowl at all times of the year. Behind these, pools with floating vegetation (based on Marsh Cinquefoil (*Potentilla palustris*)), and organic marshes (fens) are found with a multitude of niches for insect and molluscan life. Some of the interesting plant species would be Sneezewort (*Achillea ptarmica*), Lesser Tussock-sedge (*Carex diandra*), Elongated Sedge (*C. elongata*), Bladder-sedge (*C. vesicaria*), Cowbane (*Cicuta virosa*) and Creeping-Jenny (*Lysimachia nummularia*).

The acidic influence of the peat bog by the southern and western shores is reflected by a change in vegetation and by the appearance of different invertebrates. Bog mosses (*Sphagnum* spp.) appear with Purple Moor-grass (*Molinia caerulea*), Tormentil (*Potentilla erecta*), Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*) and Cross-leaved Heath (*Erica tetralix*). Two infrequent plant species are associated with these acidic conditions, namely White Sedge (*Carex curta*) and Least Bur-reed (*Sparganium minimum*).

The lake itself, being eutrophic, supports the coarse fish widespread in this catchment, e.g. Bream, Rudd, Perch, Pike and Roach. Its native fauna is not known however, though four or five dragonfly species occur.

Annagh Lough has rich biological communities and certain uncommon species. The presence of both woodland and remnant raised bog add to the value of the small area. It is one of the few Irish stations for Elongated Sedge.

16.11.2009