SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: TURLOUGH MONAGHAN

SITE CODE: 001322

Turlough Monaghan is situated just to the north of Fearagha, approximately 6km east of Headford in Co. Galway. It has a flat floor in most places apart from a rocky rise that projects from the south-west side. The north-east edge is marked by level beds of outcropping limestone which rise about 8m above the basin. The turlough seems to flood regularly but is relatively shallow.

The two ponds in the lower parts of the floor resemble each other in having a central area of Broad-leaved Pondweed (*Potamogeton natans*) and Small Pondweed (*Potamogeton berchtoldii*) surrounded by weedy species. Creeping Cinquefoil (*Potentilla reptans*) is widespread but the vegetation structure is modified by grazing pressure.

A depression at the northern end carries Common Sedge (*Carex nigra*), which changes to marginal communities as the land rises. A similar rise in the south is colonised by heathy vegetation with a considerable amount of Purple Moor-grass (*Molinia caerulea*). The soils are thin there and rock breaks through in places.

More definite outcrop on the eastern side bears some Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) scrub centrally, while at the edge the pavement is sometimes flooded. Yellow-rattle (*Rhinanthus minor*), Buckthorn (*Rhamnus catharticus*), Quaking-grass (*Briza media*) and Tawny Sedge (*Carex hostiana*) are frequent, with both Rough Hawkbit (*Leontodon hispidus*) and Lesser Hawkbit (*Leontodon taraxacoides*).

Flocks of Lapwing have been recorded at the turlough.

The turlough is basically dry with little physical variation except for the outcrops of bedrock. The vegetation, however, is quite diverse, with ten community types in a relatively small area. The site is of local scientific and conservation value.

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