SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: BRIERFIELD TURLOUGH

SITE CODE: 000594

Brierfield Turlough is located 4km east of Castleplunket in Co. Roscommon. This site is a very good example of a turlough system with excellent species diversity and a good range of habitats. It comprises a large area of shallow water, lowland wet and dry grassland, a scrub covered island, a crannóg and a small area of limestone pavement.

The south-west end is underlain by thick peat over marl. The peat floats as a scraw which is colonised by Bogbean (*Menyanthes trifoliata*), Bottle Sedge (*Carex rostrata*) and Blunt-flowered Rush (*Juncus subnodulosus*). The margins of the turlough consist of swards of sedges (*Carex* spp.), with occasional willow (*Salix* spp.).

Around the swallow holes there is Mare's-tail (*Hippuris vulgaris*), watercress (*Rorippa* spp.), Fine-leaved Water-dropwort (*Oenanthe aquatica*) and Amphibious Bistort (*Persicaria amphibia*).

The area is also an important overwintering site for several species of wildfowl including Whooper Swans which are a legally protected species.

Parts of the site have been damaged by dumping of old cars. Eutrophication of the turlough has also occurred. However there are other parts of this site which are notable for their lack of disturbance particularly from grazing. The site is also of considerable scenic value.

11.11.2009