SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: DERKMORE WOOD NATURE RESERVE

SITE CODE: 000131

This woodland site is located approximately 4km north of Glenties on the southern slopes of Cleengort Hill, Co. Donegal. The hill is composed of Granodiorite flanked by Pelites. Within the woodland, brown podzolic soils are dominant, with frequent rocky outcrops and boulders.

The main habitat is dry, broad-leaved semi-natural woodland. The dominant tree species are Sessile Oak (*Quercus petraea*), Downy Birch (*Betula pubescens*), Hazel (*Corylus avellana*) and Rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*). The woodland is grazed by sheep, which has resulted in a predominantly grassy ground flora of Yorkshire-fog (*Holcus lanatus*), Common Bent (*Agrostis capillaris*), Sweet Vernal-grass (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*) and Wavy Hair-grass (*Deschampsia flexuosa*).

In rocky areas, the ground flora is more diverse, and contains ferns (*Dryopteris aemula* and *Blechum spicant*), mosses (*Thuidium tamariscinum*, *Rhytidiadelphus loreus* and *Dicranum majus*) and many small herbs including Wood-sorrel (*Oxalis acetosella*), Heath Bedstraw (*Galium saxatile*), Slender St. John's-wort (*Hypericum pulchrum*) and Common Dog-violet (*Viola riviniana*).

A small area of wet deciduous woodland, close to a stream, adds to overall habitat diversity. The predominant tree species are willows (*Salix* spp.). The ground flora includes Golden-saxifrage (*Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*), buttercups (*Ranunculus* spp.), Water Mint (*Mentha aquatica*), Meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*), Yellow Iris (*Iris pseudacorus*) and Common Spotted-orchid (*Dactylorhiza fuchsii*).

Approximately half of the site is a National Nature Reserve and one third a commercial forestry plantation. However, the main interest of this site lies in the fact that it is one of the few remaining areas of semi-natural woodland in west Donegal.

5.11.2009