SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: RAFINNY LOUGH

SITE CODE: 001606

This small oligotrophic lough is situated at an altitude of c. 175m about 9km south-west of Monaghan Town.

In 1983, An Foras Forbartha provided the following site description:

The lough, with its peat stained water has well developed floating mats occurring at its eastern and western ends. Three pondweeds (*Potamogeton alpinus*, *Potamogeton obtusifolius* and *Potamogeton berchtoldii*) occur in the deeper water with Shoreweed (*Littorella uniflora*) and Greater Water-moss (*Fontinalis antipyretica*) growing in shallow sandy or rocky areas.

A narrow discontinuous floating leaf zone, which includes the locally sparce Floating Bur-reed (*Sparganium angustifolium*) is backed by a more or less continuous zone of emergents from which Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*) is conspicuously absent.

Around this are herb rich floating mats with Bottle Sedge (*Carex rostrata*), White Sedge (*Carex curta*) and Cowbane (*Cicuta virosa*). Willow (*Salix* spp.) have invaded the floating mat in places.

This is the most interesting of the upland oligotrophic lakes found to date in Monaghan. It is unusually species rich for an upland lake and the flora exhibits a strong northern element. The floating mat vegetation is very well developed and provides an excellent example of a successional sequence typical in small water bodies.

24.11.2009