SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: HERBERTSTOWN FEN

SITE CODE: 000436

This is a large wet fen of good botanical and ecological interest situated in Co. Limerick. It is also of interest to birds as it provides the only semi-natural refuge in this area of intensively managed agricultural land. Many waders feed in the surrounding fields. The fen contains a wide range of fen plants and habitats typically associated with this type of habitat. Common Club-rush (*Schoenoplectus lacustris*) is common along with a large variety of sedges (*Carex* spp.). There are a number of open pools with rich pond-type vegetation including water-lily (*Nuphar* spp.), Greater Bladderwort (*Utricularia vulgaris*) and Branched Bur-reed (*Sparganium erectum*). The eastern part of the fen is slightly raised and the vegetation here is more health-like with an abundance of Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*) along with Purple Moor-grass (*Molinia caerulea*) and Royal Fern (*Osmunda regalis*).

The fen is of high ecological and educational value to the locality as it represents one of the few remaining wildlife habitats in this area.

The site is relatively undisturbed with little signs of grazing or attempts at agricultural improvement. It is of vital importance to the wildlife interest of the site that this status is maintained. If possible hunting and shooting activities in the area should be monitored to establish the effects on bird populations using the area.

6.11.2009