SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: KNOCK LAKE

SITE CODE: 001203

Knock Lake is located at Balrothery, about 3km south of Balbriggan in Co. Dublin. It is a shallow artificial lake set in sloping farmland and has been used as a reservoir. Over time it has attained the character of a natural lake.

Marginal vegetation around the lake includes Common Spike-rush (*Eleocharis palustris*), Soft Rush (*Juncus effusus*), Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*), Yellow Iris (*Iris pseudacorus*) and Water Horsetail (*Equisetum fluviatile*). Further species which have been recorded on the lake shore are Common Marsh-bedstraw (*Galium palustre*), Purple-loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*), Marsh Willowherb (*Epilobium palustre*), Bulrush (*Typha latifolia*), Trifid Bur-marigold (*Bidens tripartita*), Marsh Yellow-cress (*Rorippa palustris*) and Water Mint (*Mentha aquatica*). Willow (*Salix* spp.) scrub overhangs part of the lake.

Within the lake the following plants are found: Amphibious Bistort (*Persicaria amphibia*), Mare's-tail (*Hippuris vulgaris*), Spiked Water-milfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*), water-crowfoots (*Ranunculus aquatilis, R. trichophyllus*), Unbranched Bur-reed (*Sparganium emersum*), Shoreweed (*Litorella uniflora*) and Water-plantain (*Alisma plantago-aquatica*).

Otter, a species listed in Annex II of the E.U. Habitats Directive, has been recorded regularly at the lake.

Great Crested Grebe have bred or attempted to breed at the lake since 1989. In 1992, three pairs were present and at least one was successful. This is one of only two nesting sites in County Dublin. Little Grebe, Mute Swan, Coot, Moorhen, Water Rail and Mallard breed here.

The lake also attracts wintering wildfowl. Average peak maximum counts during the three winters 1984/85-1986/87 were Whooper Swan 5, Mallard 56, Pochard 27 and Tufted Duck 67. Snipe are regular at the lake and Curlew frequent the surrounding fields.

Recently the lake has been acquired by Gormanston Angling Club and a restocking programme is being undertaken (Brown and Rainbow Trout). The site is also a Game Sanctuary for Balbriggan Game Association.

This lake, although artificial in origin, is of importance for botanical and zoological interests. Similar such water bodies are scarce Co Dublin.

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