SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: BANDON VALLEY BELOW INISHANNON

SITE CODE: 001515

The Bandon River flows almost due east for much of its course, following a natural synclinal valley that itself extends to Cloyne. At Inishannon however, the river turns abruptly to the south crossing several ridges before reaching the sea at Kinsale. The interest of the valley lies partly in its aquatic habitats since the river has not been deepened artificially as is so often the case. Four areas of scientific interest are located along the river. This site below Inishannon is the most downstream of the four sites and is located approximately 7km east of Bandon in Co. Cork.

Below Inishannon the river becomes tidal before it becomes brackish, and extensive reed-beds develop of Common Reed (*Phragmities australis*), Reed Sweet-grass (*Glyceria maxima*) and various sedges (*Carex* spp.). Summer Snowflake (*Leucojum aestivum*), Yellow Loosestrife (*Lysimachia vulgaris*) and Sweet-flag (*Acorus calamus*) occur locally with Smooth-stalked Sedge (*Carex laevigata*) and Wood Millet (*Milium effusum*), usually associated with woodlands.

Shippool Wood is a former separate area of scientific interest which is now joined to the Bandon Valley site. This wood is reported in 1972 in the An Forbas Forbartha report to be a deciduous woodland on the banks of the Bandon River with some oak (*Querus* spp.) and birch (*Betula* spp.) and other deciduous species. The woodland has been underplanted with coniferous trees. In 1981 An Foras Forbartha reported the wood in some parts were semi-natural in character and had an ecologically interesting flora and fauna. A recent survey of this woodland found it to be predominantly conifer trees.

In 1986 the Hairstreak butterfly was reported to occur in Shippool Wood.

This site is important for its wetlands including the extensive areas of Common Reed and the more diverse areas of wetland vegetation. The general flora surrounding Shippool Wood may also be of interest.

23.11.2009