SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: ISLANDTARNSEY FEN

SITE CODE: 000666

Islandtarnsey is a small wetland lying at an altitude of about 60m and situated about 3km west of Tramore in Co. Waterford. In terms of the vegetation, the site is divided into a northern block and a southern block that are approximately equal in extent.

The southern area is a Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*) reed-swamp that is being annually harvested for thatch – this activity allows a variety of wetland species to thrive with the reeds.

In the northern area, reeds are patchy and sparse, and the vegetation is that of a freshwater marsh dominated by Creeping Bent (*Agrostis stolonifera*) and Bottle Sedge (*Carex rostrata*), with a complement of associated species such as Common Marsh-bedstraw (*Galium palustre*), Bogbean (*Menyanthes trifoliata*) and Water Horsetail (*Equisetum fluviatile*) that make this a plant association that is more familiar in the north and west of Ireland.

Extensive reed-beds are characteristic here, and are a valuable component of the natural history of any region. This one is particularly interesting as it is being harvested, a process that prevents the reeds from competitively excluding a host of other wetland plant species. Although the area is shot over, especially by clay pigeon shooters, it harbours a typical bird fauna. Its association with the grassy marshland to the north adds to the variety and interest of the site, especially as it contains plant species which are not common in the south east of Ireland, such as Bog-myrtle (*Myrica gale*).

11.11.2009