SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: BALLYCAR LOUGH

SITE CODE: 000015

Ballycar Lough is a small calcareous late situated approx. 1.5km north of Newmarket-on-Fergus in Co. Clare. It is surrounded on the north and west sides by reed swamp and on the south by grazing land. The fringing vegetation is rich and diverse with a range of reed, fen and marsh communities. An interesting range of calcareous communities occur on higher ground to the north-east of the lake. Here dense hazel scrub and species rich calcareous grassland are found, adding greatly to the scientific value of the site. The sheltered location of the lake makes it ideal habitat for a large number of waterfowl populations.

The main interest of this site is its ecological value which stems from the transitory state of the fen vegetation on the northern limb. Here incipient bog vegetation (e.g. Bog-myrtle (*Myrica gale*) and Purple Moor-grass (*Molinia caerulea*)) has invaded a fen community so that conditions are finely balanced between the two.

4.11.2009