SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: BALLYNAGARBRY

SITE CODE: 001713

This esker is one of the most striking in the Moate area of Westmeath and is more complex than a simple linear ridge. Several grassy hills occur and some of their axes are at an angle to the main line of the esker.

The vegetation is largely grazed though a little Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) scrub persists on the steeper slopes and the summits. The plant assemblage is characteristic of cleared eskers with Red Fescue (*Festuca rubra*) and Glaucous Sedge (*Carex flacca*) common. These species are added to by Bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*), Slender St. John's-wort (*Hypericum pulchrum*), Wild Carrot (*Daucus carota*), Cowslip (*Primula veris*) and other species indicative of high quality grassland.

However, recent years have seen a dramatic decline in the floristic richness of the site as a result of 'improvement' for agriculture. Despite this the site remains of importance and given the right balance of grazing, fertilisation and scrub clearance, it could regain its former splendour as described by R. Praeger in 1899.

25.11.2009