SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: LOUGHBAWN HOUSE LOUGHS

SITE CODE: 001595

Black Lough and Lough Bawn are part of a large lake system around Shantonagh village, about 9km due south of Ballybay in Co. Monaghan. They are connected by a stream, and Lough Bawn is in turn connected by a river to another lough to the east (Lough Lisnakillewbane). There is a large amount of mixed woodland associated with the two loughs.

In 1972 An Foras Forbartha provided the following information:

Lough Bawn is surrounded by a fringe of Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*) and has White Water-lily (*Nymphaea alba*) in the water. Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) and willow (*Salix* spp.) bushes grow round the perimeter.

Mixed woodland is scattered around the two lakes. There is an area of deciduous woodland consisting mainly of Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), about 40m in height, to be found on a hillside to the east of Lough Bawn. Oak (*Quercus* spp.) and Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) also occur here.

There are small wooded islands on both lakes. Pockets of wet grassland and dense scrub occur on the site. These add to the sites diversity.

The area is very sheltered and secluded with the result that numerous wildfowl are to be found there, particularly in the winter months.

A count on 1st March, 1968 showed the following species to be present: Mallard (40), Teal (20), Tufted Duck (50), Pochard (2), Goldeneye (2), Gooseander (1), Mute Swan (6), Whooper Swan (15) and Great Crested Grebe (6).

A more recent count gave the following figures: Cormorant (30), Mallard (50), Pochard (18), Tufted Duck (9) and Goldeneye (8). This was carried out between 1984/5 to 1986/7, with 4 counts over 1 season (for Black Lough only). Black Lough is considered a regionally/locally important site for wildfowl.

Gooseander, Whooper Swans and Pochard seen on the site are Red Data Book species, although they were not seen in significant numbers on the site. Whooper Swan is of international importance and Gooseander and Pochard are both threatened in Ireland.

A local Gun Club has shooting rights to the area and frequent shooting may disturb the wildfowl populations.

This site is of interest because numerous wildfowl are to be found here particularly in the winter months. This includes Pochard, listed in the Red Data Book as being

threatened in Ireland. The ecological interest of the area is derived from its undisturbed nature and in order to conserve this, it is suggested that shooting on the site be kept to a minimum.

23.11.2009