SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: DARVER CASTLE WOODS

SITE CODE: 001461

Darver Castle Woods is located just south of Readypenny Cross, Co. Louth, in the grounds of Darver Castle. It is mixed woodland which was visited in 1993 and is unchanged from the original habitat described in the AFF report of 1972.

It is described in this report as mixed wet deciduous woodland of Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*), Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) and Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*).

It has a diverse understorey of orchids which includes Common Twayblade (*Listera ovata*) and Common Spotted-orchid (*Dactylorhiza fuchsii*). Plants of marshy ground such as Yellow Iris (*Iris pseudacorus*), Bulrush (*Typha latifolia*) and Marsh Horsetail (*Equisteum palustre*), and woodland plants including Lesser Celandine (*Rananculus ficaria*) and Early Dog-violet (Viola reichenbachiana) can be found here.

Rhododendron (*Rhododendron ponticum*) is present in the site and this is a threat to the scientific importance of the site if it spreads. Felling of native trees and planting of conifers are also possible threats to this site.

Wet deciduous woodland is an uncommon habitat in the region and this is a site worthy of conservation and possible regeneration into Ash woodland.

20.11.2009