SITE SYNOPSIS

SITE NAME: NAFARTY FEN

SITE CODE: 002077

This wetland lies in a hollow between drift-covered hills north of Carrickmacross, just below an industrial estate and a fruit farm. It is also the site of a pumping station, presumably for water supply to the town.

The hollow is totally filled by vegetation consisting of a mixture of sedges, rushes and reeds with a fringe of willows and some planted trees. A reed-bed of Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*) covers much of the centre of the site though a portion of it has been excavated and covered by a pvc-lined pond, probably for water treatment by a former industry. Outside the reeds there is a community of Lesser Pond-sedge (*Carex acutiformis*) and Brown Sedge (*C. disticha)* in parts of the western end, with Tall Fescue (*Festuca arundinacea*) and Lesser Stitchwort (*Stellaria graminea*) noticeable. The largest area overall is covered by a mixture of Meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*), Sharp-flowered Rush (*Juncus acutiflorus*), Yellow Iris (*Iris pseudacorus*) and Great Willowherb (*Epilobium hirsutum*) with occasional Wild Angelica (*Angelica sylvestris*), Cuckooflower (*Cardamine pratensis*) and Red Fescue (*Festuca rubra*). At the eastern end of the site this community includes Greater Tussock-sedge (*Carex paniculata*) and some Marsh Cinquefoil (*Potentilla palustris*).

Where light conditions allow it there is abundant moss growth which shows there to be a fluctuating water table. Some of the vegetation floats as a craw on the water and there is a stand of Purple Moor-grass (*Molinia caerulea*) with mosses that may stay above the water even during the winter. Willows (*Salix* spp.) are most numerous along the northern edge where both Grey Willow (*Salix cinerea* subsp. *cinerea*) and Eared Willow (*S. aurita*) occur, together with a little Silver Birch (*Betula pendula*) and some self-sown Scots Pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) derived from trees on the mineral ground.

The site is used by moderate number of Snipe in winter as well as by Water Rail. Both probably nest along with Sedge Warbler, Reed Bunting and Mallard.

This seems an unusual site for the locality and in view of the drainage which has been done to many similar areas it is of some ecological interest.

8.12.2009