



Site Name: Lough Yganavan and Lough Nambrackdarrig SAC

Site Code: 000370

This site is situated 1-2 km south of Castlemaine Harbour, and approximately 7 km west of Killorglin in Co. Kerry. The underlying geology of the area is of Carboniferous limestone; the area has also been subject to peat deposition and the deposition of wind-blown sand. Lough Nambrackdarrig and the southern half of Lough Yganavan were designated as National Nature Reserves in 1988. Lough Yganavan is a medium-sized, shallow lake (max. depth 0.8 m), with a sandy bottom and very brown, soft water (pH ranges from 5.0 to 6.8). The shoreline is mostly stony. Two other smaller lakes occur in the site - Lough Nambrackdarrig and an unnamed lough which is connected to Lough Yganavan.

The site is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) selected for the following habitats and/or species listed on Annex I / II of the E.U. Habitats Directive (* = priority; numbers in brackets are Natura 2000 codes):

- [2150] Decalcified Dune Heath*
- [3110] Oligotrophic Waters containing very few minerals
- [1024] Kerry Slug (*Geomalacus maculosus*)

Aquatic plant species recorded from Lough Yganavan include Broad-leaved Pondweed (*Potamogeton natans*), Floating Bur-reed (*Sparganium angustifolium*), Six-stamened Waterwort (*Elatine hexandra*), Water Lobelia (*Lobelia dortmanna*), Shoreweed (*Littorella uniflora*) and White Water-lily (*Nymphaea alba*). Some Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*) swamp occurs at the northern end of the lake.

A system of inland, residual fixed sand dunes is present along the south-eastern to north-eastern shoreline of Lough Yganavan. These dunes have a heathy character and a notable feature is that they flood periodically. In places the flora is typical of rich dune grassland, with well-developed annual plant communities. The seasonal pools provide habitat for an interesting invertebrate fauna. The dunes grade into blanket bog, now mostly cut away. The two smaller loughs are surrounded by cut-away bog. Two scarce species, Blue-eyed-grass (*Sisyrinchium bermudiana*) and Skullcap (*Scutellaria galericulata*), have been recorded from this sandy-heathy area.

The Kerry Slug (*Geomalacus maculosus*), which is listed on Annex II of the E.U. Habitats Directive, occurs in good numbers around the stony shore of Lough Yganavan. The Natterjack Toad (*Bufo calamita*), a Red Data Book species with a very limited distribution in south-west Ireland, breeds in large numbers in Lough

Yganavan and at Lough Nambrackdarrig, the latter lake being the most inland site known for this animal in the country.

Lough Yganavan and Lough Nambrackdarrig and their associated flora and fauna are sensitive to eutrophication, while the surrounding dune and heath system is vulnerable to land improvement and housing developments.

This site is of high ecological interest as it contains interesting and somewhat unusual examples of two E.U. Habitats Directive Annex I habitats – decalcified dune heath and oligotrophic lakes. It also supports an Annex II invertebrate, an important population of a Red Data Book amphibian and two scarce plant species.