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Ballyallia Lake

Date: 13.2.1995

Ballyallia Lake is a relatively small shallow lake situated on the River Fergus approximately 4km north of Ennis Town. This is a base rich lake with relatively clear water. The lake is set amongst heavily farmed land to the north and south, with a low-lying floodplain of wet grassland and rough grazing to the west.

There are very few emergent plants, with some patches of club rush (*Scirpus lacustris*) and common reed (*Phragmites australis*). Habitat and species diversity around the lake is low. L. Girroga, about 1km to the south of Ballyallia is included in the site. It is a small lake with high habitat and species diversity. There is a well developed reed fringe with a fen like community of saw sedge (*Cladium mariscus*), club rush (*Scirpus lacustris*), purple moor-grass (*Molinia caerulea*) and the less common black bog rush (*Schoenus nigricans*). A well established hazel woodland slopes down to the northern lakeshore.

Waterfowl numbers on Ballyallia Lake and the floodplain to the west are high, with internationally important numbers of shoveler and possibly as high for teal and wigeon. It is nationally important for gadwall and holds significant numbers of tufted duck, coot, lapwing and curlew.

Ballyallia Lake is being managed as a Wildfowl Sanctuary that has been established for over 20 years. Unfortunately, due to much agricultural improvement the adjacent land to the north and south of the lake is intensively managed and being situated on sloping ground leading to the southern lake edge poses a serious threat to the water quality of the system.