MONAGHAN (2)

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CONSERVATION AND AMENITY ADVISORY SERVICE

Revisions to the List of Areas of Scientific Interest in County Monaghan

Eanna Ni Lamhna

February 1984

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INTRODUCTION

A Preliminary Report on Areas of Scientific Interest in County Monaghan was produced by An Foras Forbartha in 1972. This contained 28 areas, of which 15 were listed in the 1978 County Monaghan Development Plan as areas of scientific importance worthy of conservation.

In 1981, Areas of Scientific Interest in Ireland was published by An Foras Forbartha, in which areas of scientific importance in each county were revised, updated, and summarised. For County Monaghan, 24 areas are considered to be of scientific importance, i.e. 6 were dropped from the 1972 County Report, 2 were described under one heading and 3 new ones were added.

The Forest and Wildlife Service has undertaken extensive field-work in the county and, as a result of this work, 8 additional areas of scientific interest have been added to the county list. An Foras Forbartha is indebted to the Service for supplying data relating to these areas. The situation in 1984, therefore, is as follows:

- There are 32 listed areas of scientific interest in County Monaghan.
- 24 of these are listed and briefly described in the report Areas of Scientific Interest in Ireland, 1981, and include 3 new areas.
- An additional 8 areas have been added since 1981.
- 6 areas have been dropped since the original county report of 1972. These are listed below; the one marked* was included in the 1978 County Monaghan Development Plan.

No. in County Report, 1972	Name of Area	Reasons for Omission from Current List
*7	Castleblayney Drumlin Area	Although a fine area of drumlins it is too large to be conserved as a site of scientific importance.
14	Spring Loughs	Not a notable site. Better loughs have been found since.
16	Quarry near Smithborough	Not a notable example of silurian slate.
18	Tassan Lough	) Better examples of the veg-
23	Lough Ross	) etation types described in
25	Cordoo Lough	) these sites have been dis-) covered as a result of) further fieldwork.

- Areas 3 and 6 in the 1972 report have been merged to form Area 1 in Areas of Scientific Interest in Ireland, 1981.

ADDITIONAL AREAS OF SCIENTIFIC INTEREST IN COUNTY MONAGHAN

The following pages describe areas of scientific interest which should be added to those in the County Report of 1972. The areas are in two groups:

(i) In the report Areas of Scientific Interest in Ireland, 3 sites extra to the 1972 report are named. These are:

No. 2	Dromore Lakes
No. 5	Muckno Lake
No. 22	Tobermannan Bridge (Riverbank near)

(ii) Since 1981 8 other sites of scientific importance have been added. These are:

Emylough
Allagesh Lough
Lisarilly Bog
Killyhoman Marsh
Corcreeghy Lake and Woodland
Rosefield Lake and Woodland
Mullaghmore Lake (South)
Kilroosky and Dummy's Lough

AGF 1984

Name of Area	DROMORE LAKES
Size	280 ha
Grid Reference	H 62 17
Scientific Interest	Ecological (Ornithology and Zoology)
Rating	Regional Importance

Description of Area

The area of interest is shown overleaf. The site consists of three waterbodies of 180 ha. lying amongst drumlins and surrounded by extensive coniferous woodlands. The woodlands contain such mammals as red and grey squirrel, pine marten, and fallow deer. The water area is of greater importance, holding food supplies for a large number of wildfowl. Nesting cover exists practically all around the lakeshore where grebes, coot, mallard, teal and tufted duck breed.

The area is more important as a wintering site and probably supports the highest density of wildfowl for its size in County Monaghan. It also has good diversity of species. A count taken in January 1980 showed the following birds to be present:-

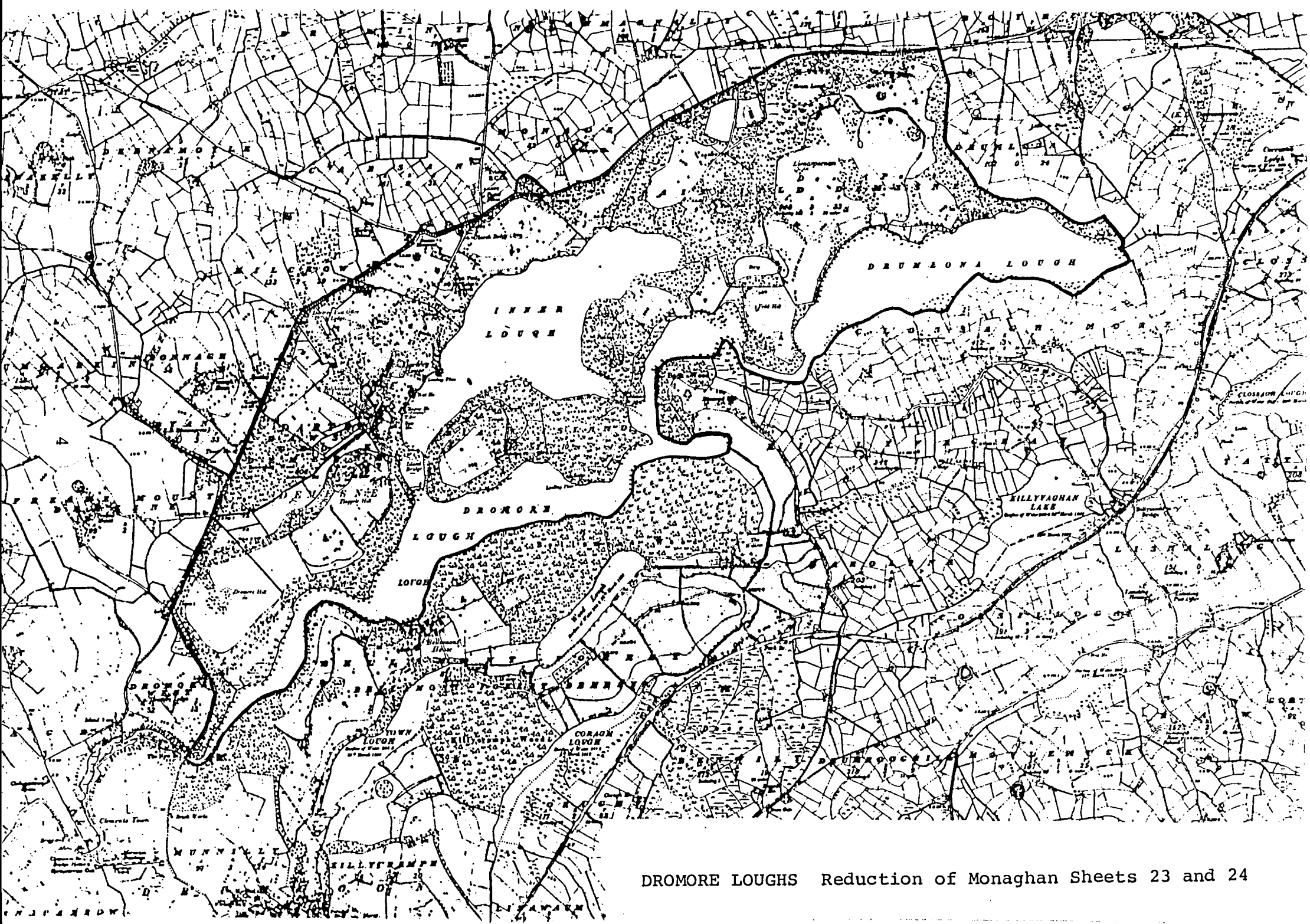
Species	Population
Great-crested grebe	56
Little grebe	12
Cormorant	10
Mallard	132
Teal	56
Wigeon	56
Pintail	8
Shoveller	24
Tufted Duck	62
Goldeneye	39
Whooper Swan	26
Coot	6

Evaluation

As regards the total numbers of birds present the Dromore Lakes aresurpassed by Lough Egish and equalled by Lough Muckno, but these lakes are considerably bigger. The wildfowl numbers have been enhanced by the fact that the area is a bird sanctuary under the terms of the Wildlife Act, 1976.

Threats to the Area

A Low Flow Scheme was proposed for the area in 1980. Following a study carried out by An Foras Forbartha in September 1980 it was concluded that the proposed changes to the water regime would not adversely affect the bird life and might positively create a habitat for wading birds in autumn.



DROMORE LOUGHS Reduction of Monaghan Sheets 23 and 24

Name of Area	MUCKNO LAKE
Size	360 ha.
Grid Reference	H 84 19
Scientific Interest	Ecological (Ornithology & Zoology)
Rating	Regional Importance

Description of Area

The area of interest is marked on the map overleaf.

This site consists of a eutrophic limestone lake surrounded by a few small marginal fens. It has a moderate number (500) of wintering wildfowl, some of which breed around its margins in the April-June period.

A bird count in February 1979 showed the following birds to be present:

Species	Population
Great crested grebe	4
Little Grebe	6
Cormorant	12
Mallard	78
Teal	4
Shoveler	1
Tufted Duck	160
Pochard	65
Goldeneye	12
Mute Swan	5
Coot	44
Lapwing	50

Other wetland birds recorded for the lake are: grey heron, water rail, snipe, common sandpiper, redshank, black-headed gull, reed bunting and sedge warbler.

Fish species present in the Lake are brown trout, pike, rudd, perch, bream, tench and eels. Amongst the aquatic vegetation and under stones and in mud on the lakebed are large populations of invertebrates such as caddis fly larvae, waterboatmen (Notonecta and Corixa spp), the water hoglouse, (Asellus aquaticus) turbellarians, and spire shells (Limnea spp). There is considerable scientific interest in a water flea, Bythotrephes, which shows a complete gradation between two distinct species.

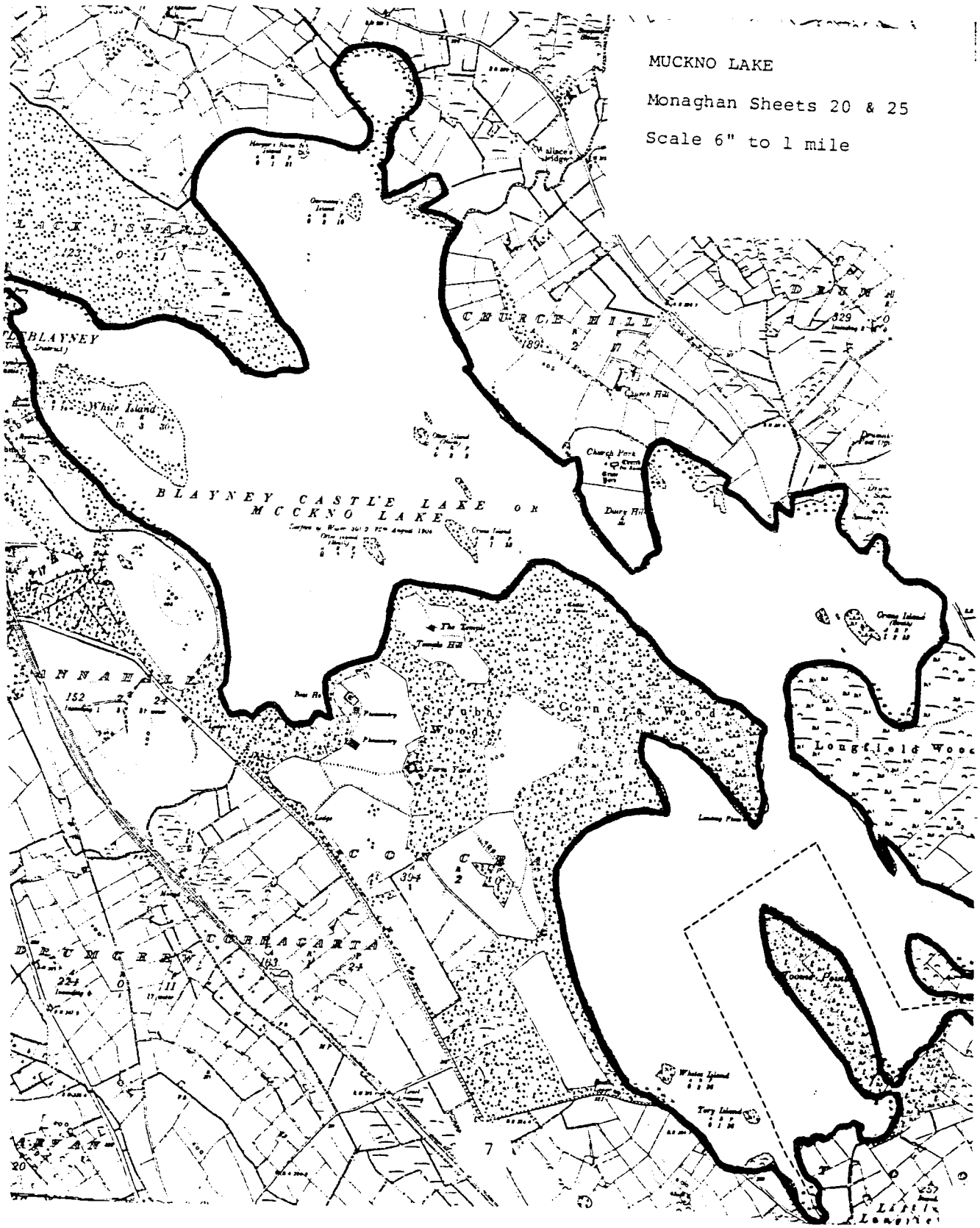
Threats to the Area

Possible threats to the scientific value of the area are:

(i) the eutrophication of the lake caused by the discharge of domestic and agricultural effluent,

(ii) the use of the lake as a source of urban water supply,

(iii) the use of the lake for recreational purposes.


MUCKNO LAKE
Monaghan Sheets 20 & 25
Scale 6" to 1 mile
BLAYNEY CASTLE LAKE OR MUCKNO LAKE
BLAYNEY
CHURCH HILL
White Island
Church Yard
Scrubb Wood
Longfield Wood
CORLACARTA
DRUMCREW
ARVAN

Name of Area	RIVERBANK NEAR TOBERMANNAN BRIDGE
Acreage	1 acre
Grid Reference	N 827, 967
Scientific Interest	Geological
Rating	Local Importance

Description of Area

The area of interest is shown on the map overleaf.

In this region the river Lagan passes through flat pasture land. Generally its shallow channel has been cut through clays, but in this bend the river crosses a narrow band of limestone. In this limestone have been found large numbers of the fossil blastoid, Orbitremites derbiensis.

Evaluation

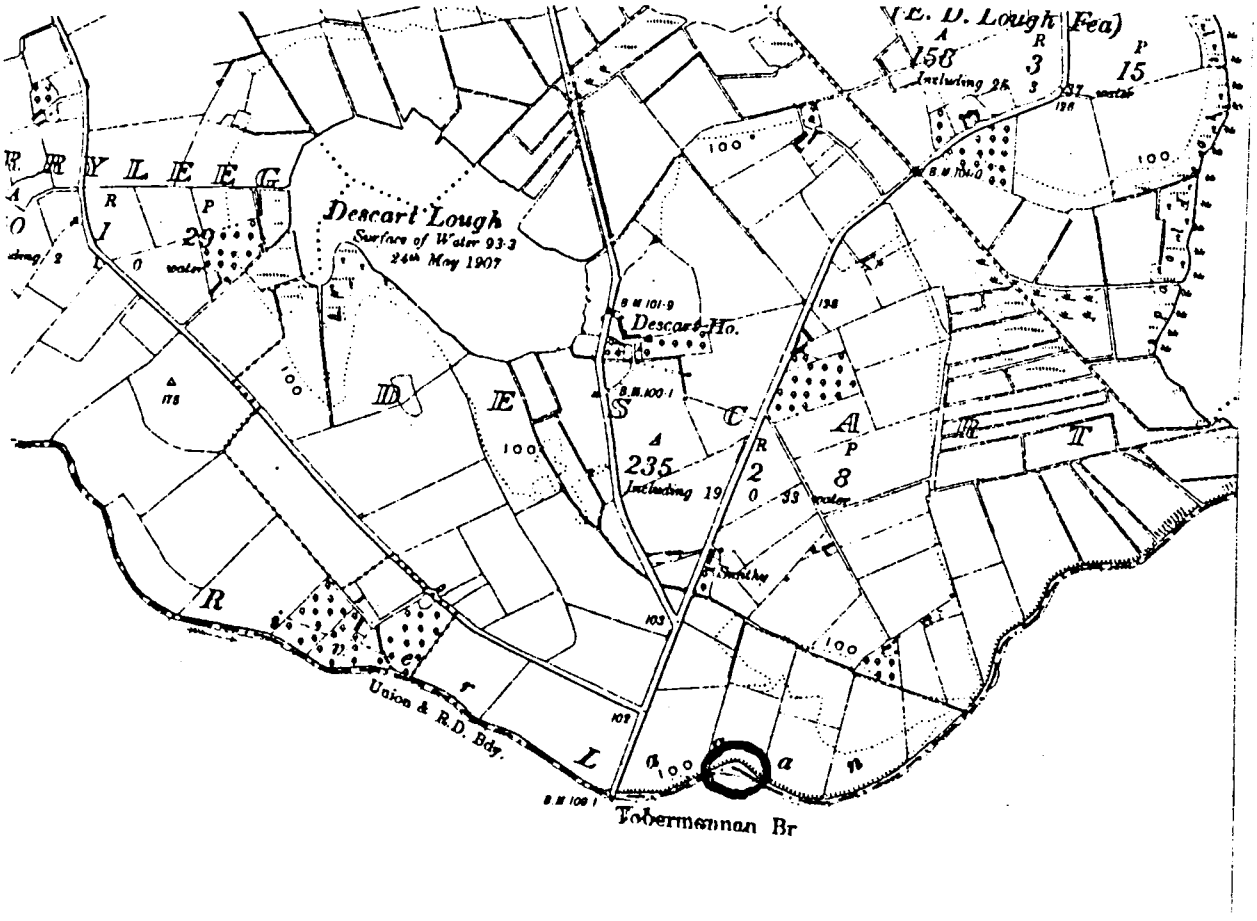
Although this species of blastoid has been found in a number of other localities in Ireland, the extraordinary abundance of specimens at this site results in its being considered a site of scientific importance worthy of conservation.

Threats to the Area

None known or foreseeable.

Recommendations

No development should be permitted that would destroy or restrict access to this site.



TOBERMANNAN BRIDGE

Monaghan Sheet 34

Scale 6" to 1 mile

Name of Area	EMYLOUGH
Size	50 ha.
Grid Reference	H 690, 440
Scientific Importance	Ornithological
Rating	Regional Importance

Description of the Area

The area is outlined on the map overleaf.

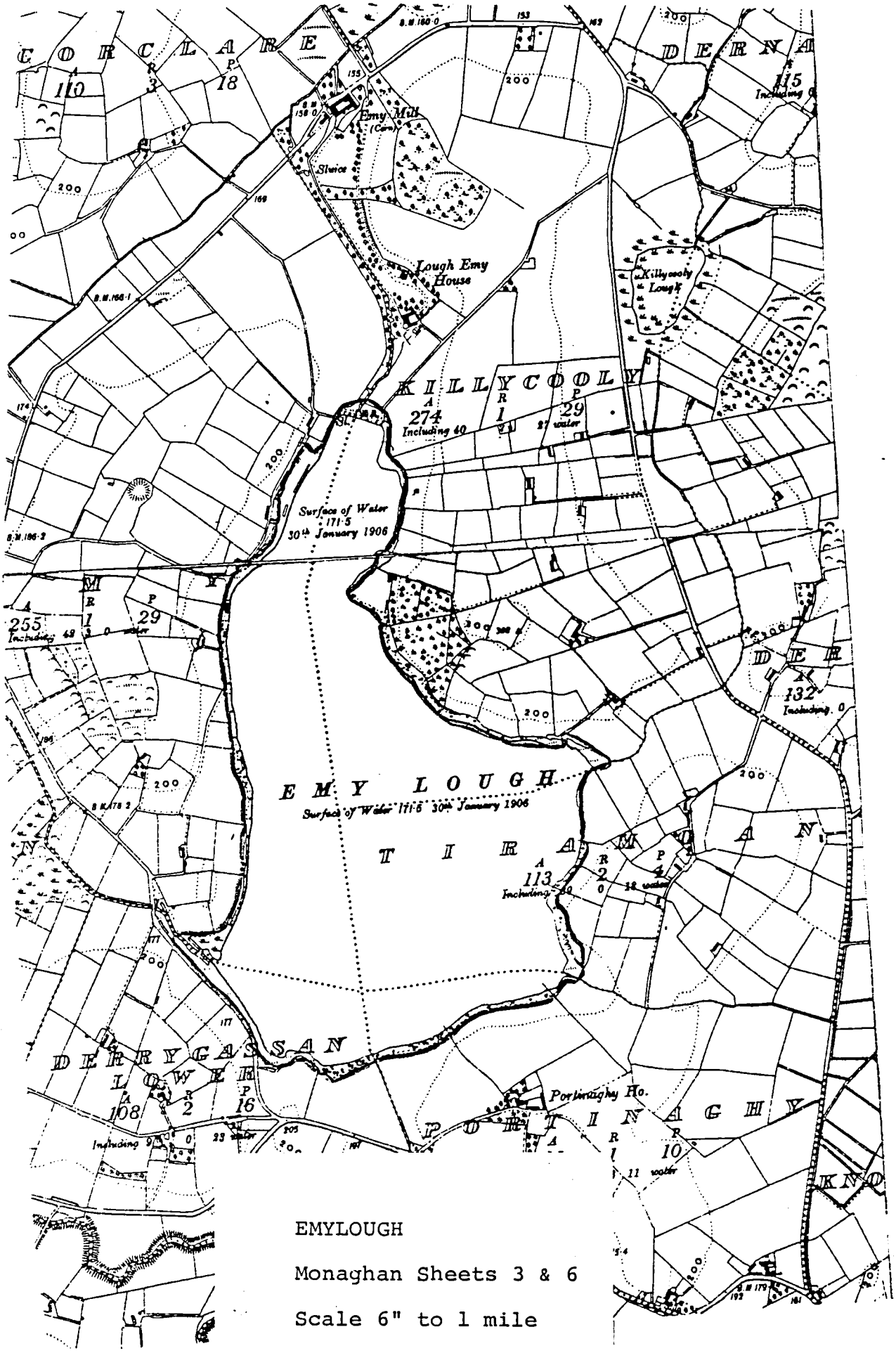
This lake is a mesotrophic lake lying in an inter-drumlin hollow in the Blackwater catchment area. The north and western shores are stony and are fringed by a narrow band of alder (Alnus) and willow (Salix atrocinerea). The southern shore has extensive zones of sedge (Carex vesicaria), horsetail (Equisetum fluviatile) and pondweed (Polygonum amphibium).

The site is of interest ornithologically. A flock of 50-60 greylag geese regularly use it as a night roost. This species of goose has a total Irish wintering population of only c 1,000 confined to a small number of regular sites. A daytime count carried out in December 1980 found the following species present.

Species	Number	Species	Number
Little Grebe	2	Tufted Duck	46
Cormorant	6	Whooper Swan	13
Grey Heron	9	Moorhen	1
Mallard	11	Coot	13

Evaluation

The area because of the roost of greylag geese can be considered to be of regional importance. It is a statutory wildfowl sanctuary.



EMYLOUGH

Monaghan Sheets 3 & 6

Scale 6" to 1 mile

Name of Area	ALLAGESH LOUGH
Size	4.8 ha.
Grid Reference	H 590 346
Scientific Importance	Ecological
Rating	Regional Importance

Description of Site

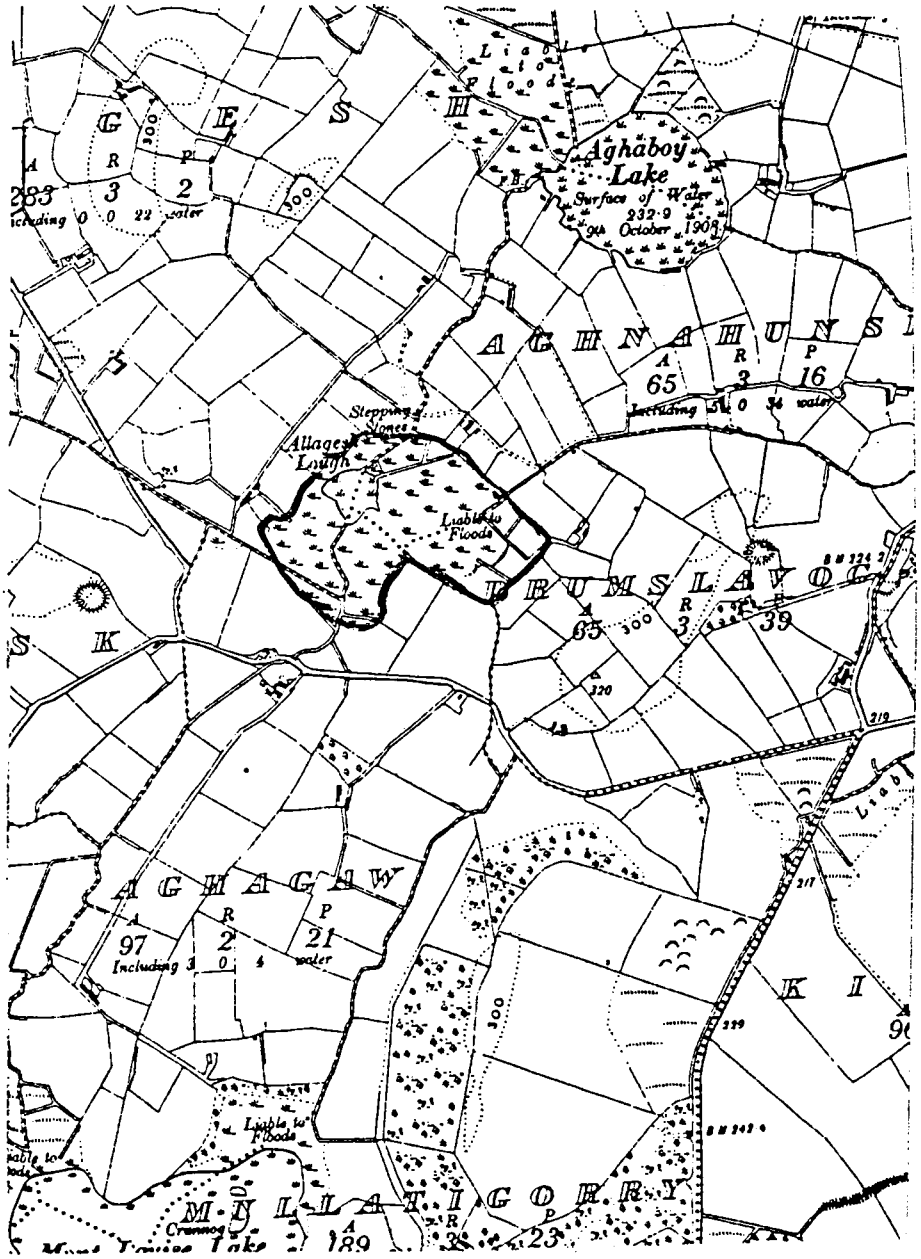
The site of scientific importance at Allagesh Lough is marked on the map overleaf. This is a small calcareous lake almost overgrown with water lily (Nuphar). The water edge is fringed with reed beds of Phragmites (common reed), Scirpus (clubrush), Typha (bullrush) and Sparganium erectum (burr-reed). Outside these reedbeds on the south-east side is an area of quaking scraw bog.

Ten different types of plant communities occur containing such notably rare plants as:

Epipactis palustris	Marsh Orchid
Equisetum variegatum	Horsetail
Carex lasiocarpa	Downy-Fruited Sedge
Carex acutiformis	Lesser Pond Sedge
Carex rostrata	Bottle Sedge
Thelypteris palustris	Marsh Fern
Juncus subnodulosus	Blunt Flowered Rush
Potomogeton coloratus	Pondweed
Utricularia intermedia	Bladderwort

Threats to Site

The site is threatened by drainage works to be carried out by the Office of Public Works which will ruin the site as a site of scientific importance.



ALLAGESH LOUGH

Monaghan Sheet 8

Scale 6" to 1 mile

Name of Area	LISARILLY BOG
Size	1.2 ha.
Grid Reference	H 582 268
Scientific Importance	Ecological (Botanical)
Rating	Regional Importance

Description of Area

Lisarilly Bog is marked on the map overleaf.

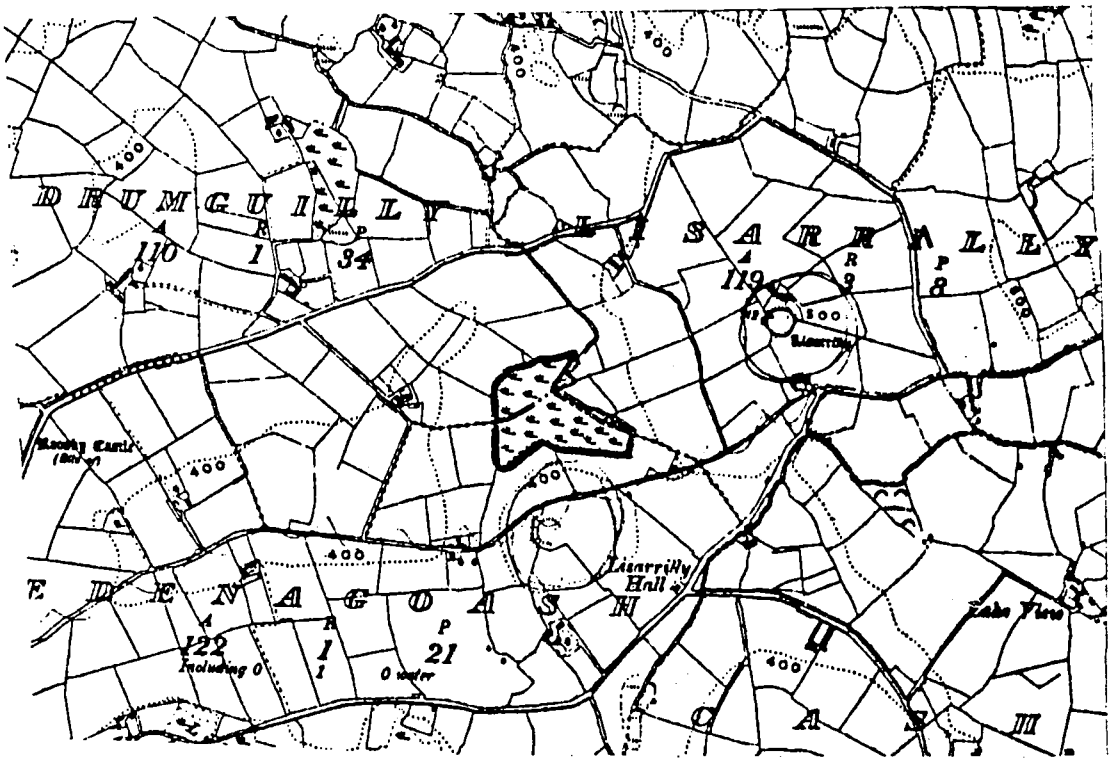
This is a small fen in transition to a raised bog. It is the only reasonably intact example of raised bog development in the Finn-Lachey catchment area and is not due to be drained by the Office of Public Works.

This is an area of acid scraw in a hollow surrounded by drumlins. Some areas have been cut for peat, but it is mostly undisturbed. The following plant communities occur:

Willow Scrub (Salix)
Vaccinium oxycoccus (Cranberry) scraw
Carex diandra (2 Stamened-Sedge) scraw
Sphagnum (Bog Moss), Carex limosa (Mud Sedge) scraw
Grassy zone with Carex rostrata (Bottle Sedge) and Holcus lanatus (Yorkshire Fog)
Sphagnum (Bog Moss) and Menyanthes (Bog Bean) scraw
Cutaway Bog with Calluna (Ling Heather), hummocks and Chara (Stonewort) in pools

Threats to the Area

The area could easily be conserved as drainage is difficult due to its position in the hollow.



LISARILLY

Monaghan Sheet 12

Scale 6" to 1 mile

Name of Area	KILLYHOMAN MARSH
Size	22 ha.
Grid Reference	H 630 523
Scientific Importance	Ecological
Rating	Local

Description of Area

This area of scientific importance is marked on the map overleaf.

This is an area of solid scraw which has been invaded by Salix (willow), Alnus (alder) and Betula (birch). There is a succession from scraw with such plants as:

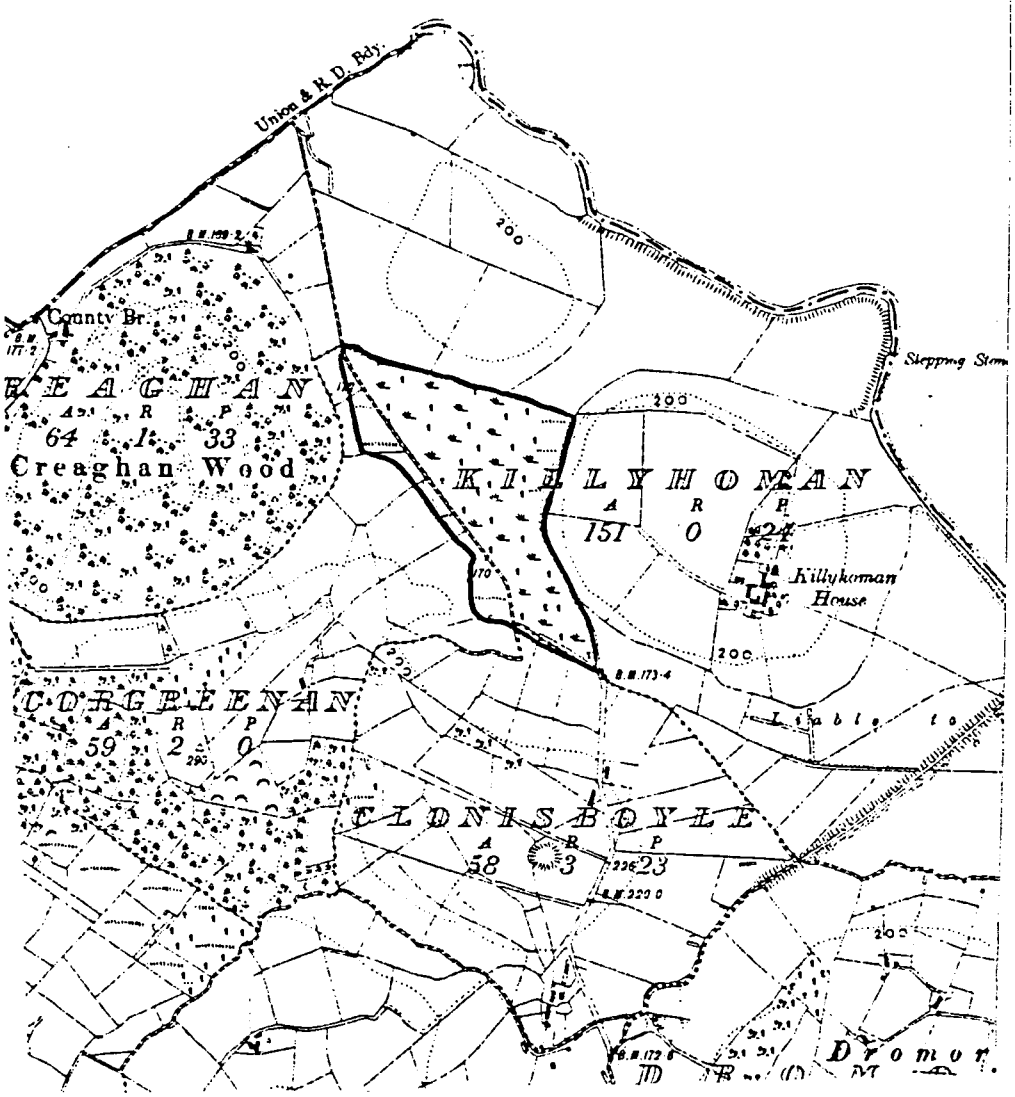
Equisetum fluviatile	Horsetail
Carex nigra	Common Sedge
C. diandra	Two-Stamened Sedge
C. rostrata	Bottle Sedge
Typha angustifolia	Bullrush

to birch woodland on wet mineral soil.

Threats to the Site

The area is listed for drainage under the Office of Public Works Blackwater catchment drainage scheme. If this takes place the reclamation following the drainage will destroy the scientific interest.

This site is at the end of the proposed drainage channels and could be removed from the scheme with a minimum degree of disruption.



KILLYHOMAN MARSH

Monaghan Sheet 1

Scale 6" to 1 mile

Name of Area	CORCREEGHY LAKE AND WOODLAND
Size	4.6 ha.
Grid Reference	H 627 315
Scientific Importance	Ecological (Botanical)
Rating	Local

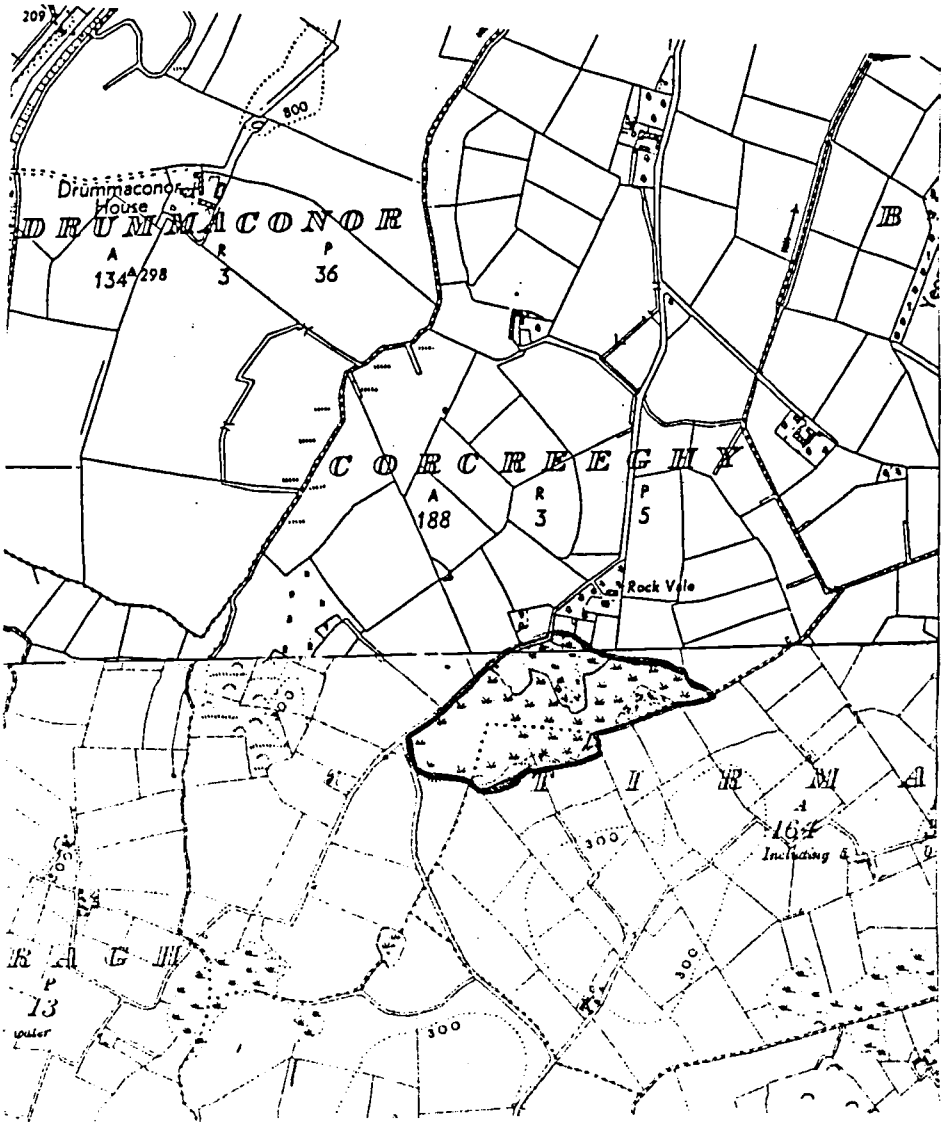
Description of Area

The area is marked on the map overleaf.

This is a small undisturbed lake with a thin margin of marsh/scraw with the exception of the eastern end which has extensive wet Salix (willow), Alnus (alder) woodland, with Thelypteris palustris (marsh fern), a plant rare in County Monaghan. There is an intact succession from open water, through reed beds of Phagmites (common reed), to a drier marsh with Angelica, Filipendula (meadow sweet), Lychnis flos-cuculi (ragged robin), Eriophorum angustifolia (bog cotton) to woodland with willow and beech. This wetland is notable in that it occurs in an area of shale and grits.

Threats to Area

This area will be drained if the present OPW plan for draining the Blackwater catchment area goes ahead. However as the site occurs at the end of a drainage channel it could be removed from the scheme with a minimum degree of disruption.



CORCREEGHY

Monaghan Sheet 13

Scale 6" to 1 mile

Name of Area	ROSEFIELD LAKE AND WOODLAND
Size	14 ha.
Grid Reference	H 633 337
Scientific Importance	Ecological (Botanical)
Rating	Local Importance

Description of Area

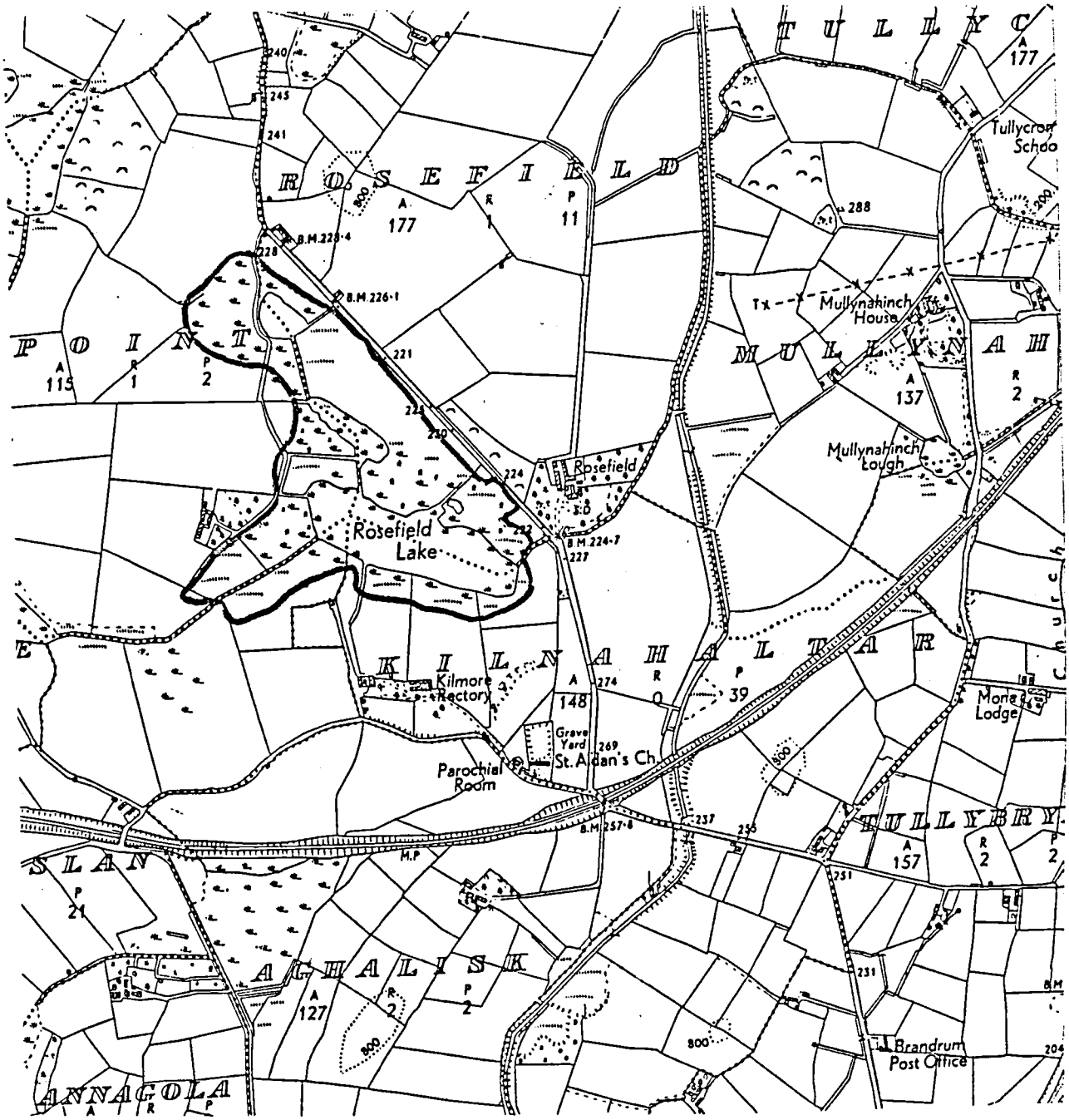
Rosefield Lake and the surrounding zone of scientific importance are shown on the map overleaf.

This is a calcareous lake surrounded by reed beds and an alder wood. The lake contains Chara (stoneweed), Elodea (Canadian pondweed) and Potamogeton natans (pondweed). There is an emergent zone of Scirpus lacustris (clubrush), Typha (bullrush) and Cladium (saw sedge). This zone is surrounded by reed beds of Phragmites (common reed), Carex rostrata (bottle sedge) and Juncus articulosis (rush). There is an alder wood on the north, east and west margins varying in width from 1-20 m which contains Salix atrocinerea (willow) and Carex disticha (creeping brown sedge).

This is a very good example of the transition from lake shore to alder woodland.

Threats to Area

This area is threatened by the OPW Blackwater drainage scheme.



ROSEFIELD LAKE

Monaghan Sheet 9

Scale 6" to 1 mile

Name of Area	MULLAGHMORE LAKE (SOUTH)
Size	20 ha.
Grid Reference	H 624 381
Scientific Importance	Ecological (Botanical and Ornithological)
Rating	Local Importance

Description of Area

This site of scientific importance is marked on the map overleaf.

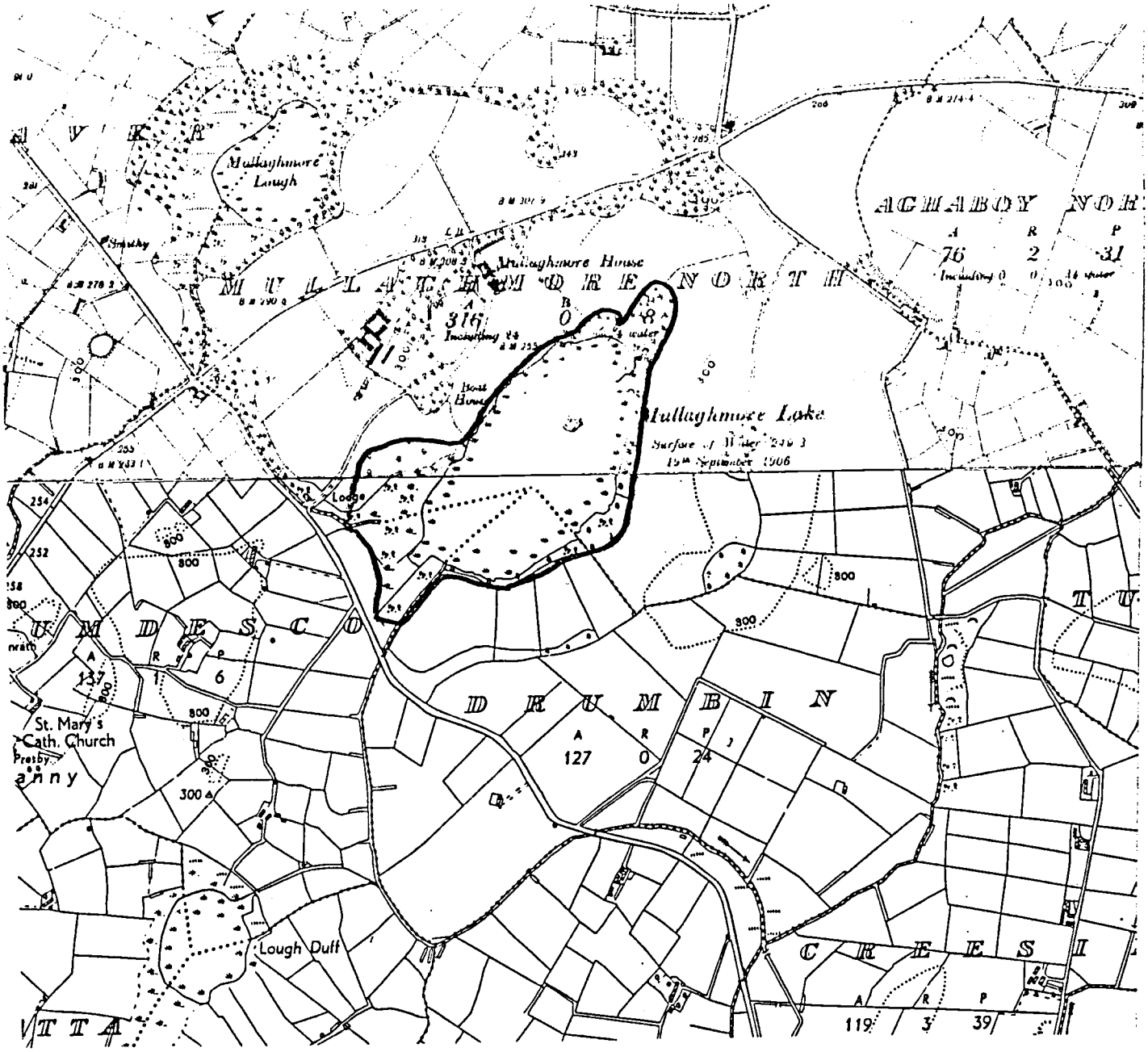
This is a shallow lake which is rapidly infilling, and provides an excellent example of colonisation of open water by floating scraw.

The lake surface is colonised by Nymphea and Nuphar (lilies). The emergent vegetation consists of dense reed beds of Scirpus lacustris (clubreed) and Equisetum fluviatile (horsetail) especially in the south and west. This is surrounded by marsh vegetation containing Menyanthes (bog bean), Lysmachia vulgaris (yellow loosestrife) and Galium palustris (marsh bedstraw) There is an alder/willow scrub woodland on the SE side.

There is a better than average number and variety of waterfowl on the lake including Tufted Duck, Pochard, Mute and Whooper Swan and a small breeding colony of Grey Heron.

Threats to the Site

None. This area is not in the Blackwater drainage scheme.



MULLAGHMORE LOUGH

Monaghan Sheet 6

Scale 6" to 1 mile

Name of Area	KILROOSKY AND DUMMY'S LOUGH
Size	11 ha.
Grid Reference	H 490 275
Scientific Importance	Ecological (Botanical)
Rating	Local Importance

Description of Area

This area of scientific interest is marked on the map overleaf.

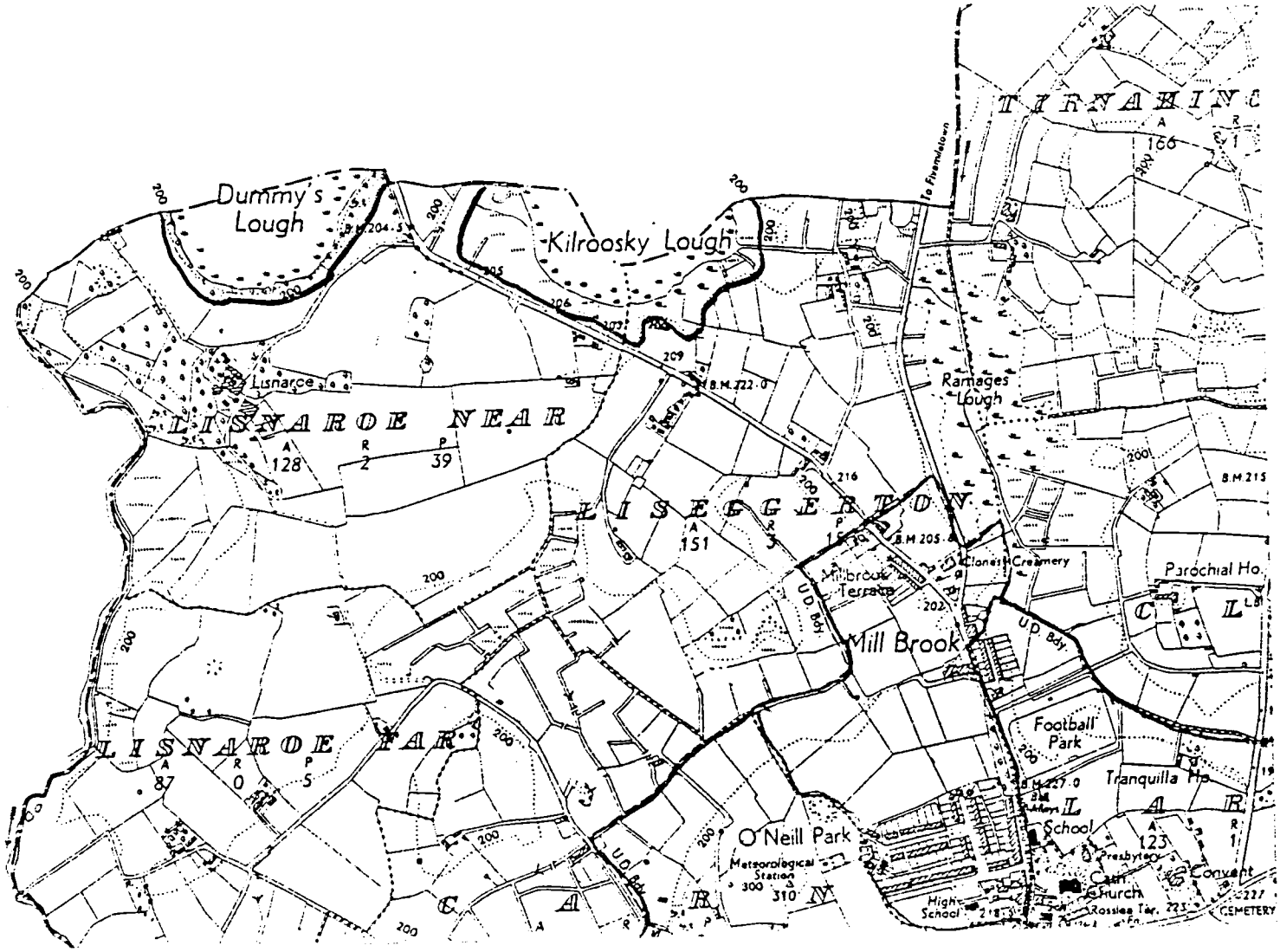
Kilroosky Lake is a large calcareous lake with beds of Chara (stone-wort), Nuphar and Nymphea (water lilies). Reed beds of Scirpus (club-rush), Phragmites (common reed) and Cladium (saw sedge) encircle the lake. There is some woodland on the western shore. Six different plant communities and 43 plant species have been recorded in the area, of which the following are the most interesting:

Eleocharis quinqueflora	Spike-Rush
Potamageton coloratus	Pondweed
Parnassia palustris	Grass of Parnasseus
Epipactis palustris	Marsh Helleborine
Galium uliginosum	Fen Bedstraw
Cladium mariscum	Saw Sedge

Dummy's Lake is a calcareous lake surrounded by reed beds of Cladium (saw-sedge) and Typha angustifolia (bullrush). These well developed reed beds constitute the scientific importance of the lake.

Threats to the Area

These two lakes are not due to be drained under the Office of Public Works catchment drainage schemes in Monaghan and so are not under any foreseeable threat in the future.



KILROOSKY AND DUMMY'S LAKES

Monaghan Sheet 11

Scale 6" to 1 mile

written by Jim Ryan (for Monaghan Co. Co. ?).

Name: Rafinny Lough

Grid Reference: H 618 263.

Area: 4.7 ha.

Rating: Local

Map Reference: ½" O.S. Map No 8, Co Monaghan No 13

Description:

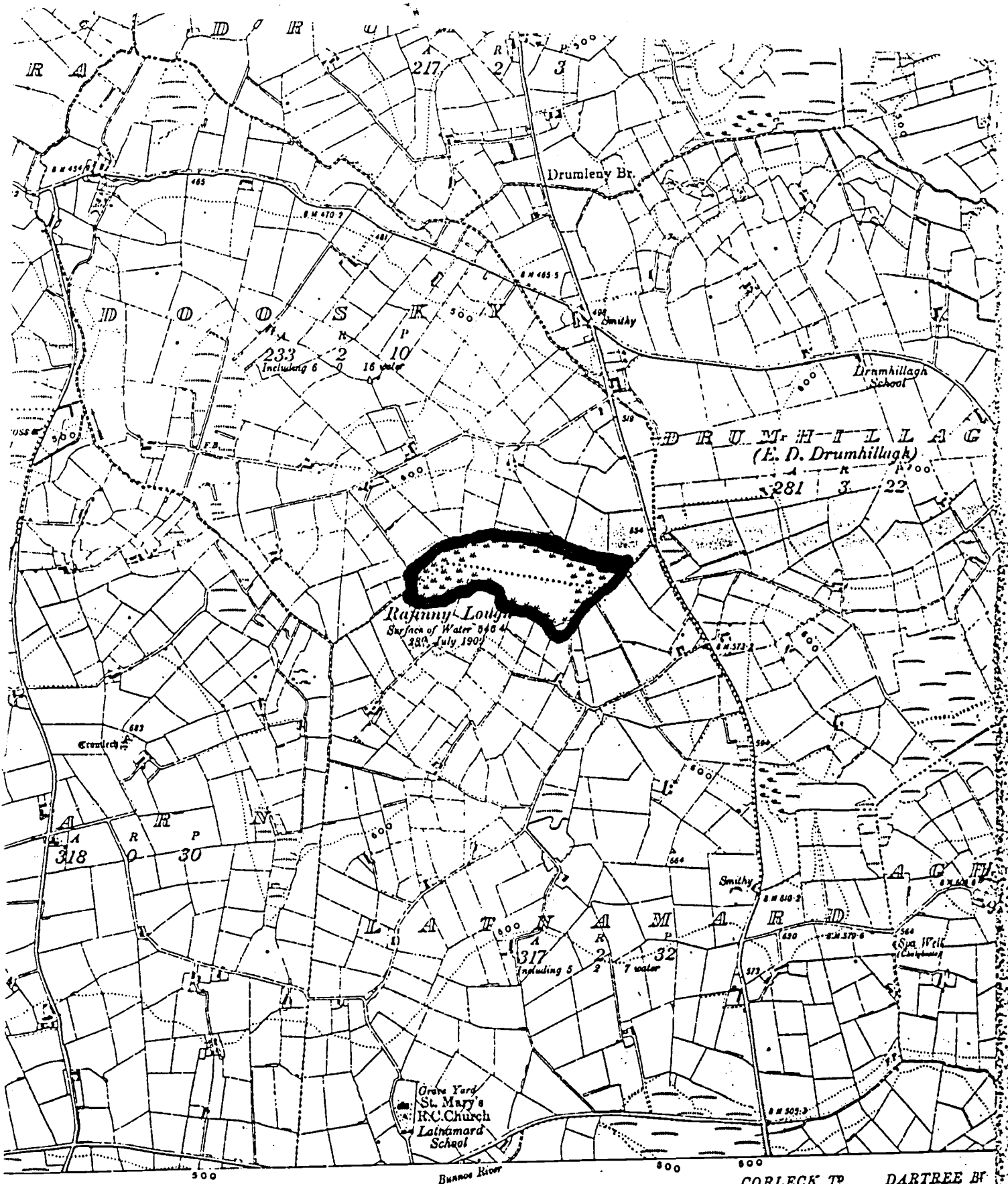
A small oligatrophic lake at an altitude of 550 feet with peat stained water. Well developed floating mats occur at the eastern and western ends of the lake. Three pondweeds Potamogeton alpinus, P. obtusifolius and P. berchtoldii occur in the deeper water with the Shoreweed Littorella uniflora and Willow Moss Fontinalis antipyretiea growing in shallow sandy or rocky areas. A narrow discontinuous floating leaf zone, which includes the locally rare floating Bur-reed Sparganium angustifolium is backed by more or less continuous zone of emergents from which the Common Reed Phragmites communis is conspicuously absent. This is followed by the herb rich floating mats with Bottle Sedge Carex rostrata, White Sedge C. curta and Cowbane Cicuta virosa Willow Salix species have invaded the floating mat in places.

Evaluation:

This is the most interesting of the upland oligatraphic lakes found to date in Monaghan. It is unusually species rich for an upland lake and the flora enhibits a stong northern element. The floating mat vegetation is very well developed and provides an excellent example of a successional sequence typical in small waterbodies.

Threats:

None apparent.



n 1835. Revised in 1907-8.

CHARACTERISTICS AND SYMBOLS

County	Townland
Barony	Municipal Wards
Parish	Contours 200

The Representation on this Map of a Road, Track, or Footpath, is no evidence of the existence of a rig