

GALWAY - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Kiltullagh Lough
Other names used for site	
IGH THEME	IGH1 Karst, IGH7 Quaternary
TOWNLAND(S)	Creggaun, Shannagh Beg, Kiltullagh, Lehurick, Monagormley
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Glenamaddy
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	18
ITM CO-ORDINATES	561100E 759350N (centre of lake)
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET No. 39	GS1 BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO. 11

Outline Site Description

This site comprises a lake which is actually a turlough feature, but which empties only every few years, and not on an annual basis.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

The turlough is situated within an area dominated by bedrock of pure, Lower Carboniferous limestones, which occur throughout this area of northeast County Galway. The turlough feature itself has formed in post-glacial times, over the last 11,000 years.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

Kiltullagh Lough is set within a belt of 'lakes' (mapped as lakes) in northeast Galway, which are actually turloughs that do not empty fully each summer, but disappear only occasionally, every few years. These lakes include Glenamaddy Turlough, Kiltullagh Lough and Levally Lough.

This was only discovered by the scientific community as a turlough in 2010, when the lake emptied fully and the large swallow hole at its base was exposed.

The water sinking into this swallow hole was dye-traced that summer, and the water emerged at Gortgarrow Spring, 4 km to the west. The lake fully emptied again in summer of 2018.

Site Importance – County Geological Site; may be recommended for Geological NHA

This is a turlough that is being considered by the National Parks and Wildlife Service for designation as a potential NHA (Site code 001282). As an ecological habitat it is probably of national importance, with golden plover and whooper swan wildfowl found there. Geologically it is certainly of County Geological Site importance but may deserve consideration for geological NHA status, if a review of IGH 1 Karst sites is undertaken.

Management/promotion issues

The turlough is on private farmland and not suitable for visiting, but is easily visible and best seen from the public road on the eastern side, as well as from a *cul-de-sac* which runs adjacent to its northern shore in Creggaun. The signboards in Glenamaddy Village, which explain the hydrology and ecology of Glenamaddy Turlough, could be enhanced with a board detailing the unique subsurface hydrogeology of the lakes in the wider area, and including Glenamaddy Turlough, Kiltullagh Lough, and Levally Lough.



The half-empty Kiltullagh Lough, July 2018. Viewed from the north.



The lake almost fully dry in June 2010, again viewed from the north.



The swallow hole in the floor of the lake basin, July 2018.



Species-rich wet grassland exposed in the dry floor of the lake basin, July 2018.

