

GALWAY - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Lough Nafooeey Waterfall
Other names used for site	Black Rock
IGH THEME	IGH4 Cambrian - Silurian, IGH14 Fluvial and Lacustrine Geomorphology
TOWNLAND(S)	An Gabhlán Oirr (Gowlaun East)
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Fionnaithe (Finny)
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	12
ITM CO-ORDINATES	493910E 759310N (waterfall)
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NO. 38	GSI BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NOS. 10, 11

Outline Site Description

Cascades descending into a tree- and scrub- covered gorge west of Lough Nafooeey.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

The waterfall descends over Mweelrea Formation (Ordovician, Darriwilian. Llanvirn in older terminology) fluvial boulder-rich conglomerates and coarse grained sandstones.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

Run-off draining a broad upland blanket bog plateau (elevation >100m) converges into a stream that flows eastwards alongside the L1301 Maam Valley-Finny road towards Lough Nafooeey. The stream descends down cascades along a steep slope around 50m in height. Robert Lloyd Praeger made a brief note of the waterfall in his 1906 paper: *'The fine waterfall above Lough Nafooeey is remarkable chiefly for the beautiful pebbles of jasper of many shades that fill the conglomerate at the top of the waterfall'*.

Above the waterfall, boulder-rich conglomerates of the Mweelrea Formation are exposed in the streambed. The conglomerates comprise large rounded boulders, up to 90 cm in diameter.

Site Importance – County Geological Site

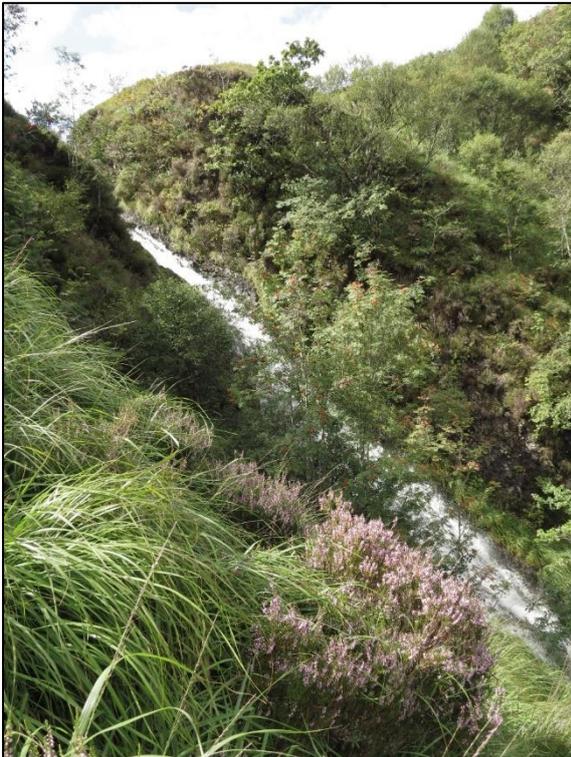
This site is of interest for the excellent fresh exposures of conglomerates in the stream bed and for the spectacular, albeit heavily covered and concealed waterfall.

Management/promotion issues

The site above the falls is fenced off as much of the terrain is grazed by sheep. The steep slopes overlooking the cascades are fenced off, and the ground is both heavy with grasses and other vegetation. Access here is restricted and not encouraged due to the dangers posed by the steep terrain. Approaching the gorge and waterfall from the east (road bridge) is less challenging.



View looking east along L1301 road. Waterfall on left, at head of the tree and scrub covered gorge. Lough Nafooye in distance.



Waters cascading down steep gorge.



Stream flowing over boulder-rich conglomerates just above waterfall.



Lough Nafoeey Waterfall, mid 1800s. (The Lawrence Collection)
<http://catalogue.nli.ie/Record/vtls000325461/Map>