

GALWAY - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Suck River Callows
Other names used for site	River Suck Callows
IGH THEME	IGH14 Fluvial and Lacustrine Geomorphology
TOWNLAND(S)	Garryduff, Annaghcorrib, Kylemore, Lismanny, Cloonascragh, Kellysgrove, Pollboy, Townsparks, Cleaghgarve, Cleabeg, Creggaun, Shanbvoley, Dalysgrove, Addergoole North, Addergoole South, Srahloughra, Derryfadda, Srahgarve, Gortananny, Derreen, Muckanagh North, Tully, Garreer, Srahaunnagort, Cloonruff, Clooncannon, Cloonaspaddaun, Rockwood, Easterfield
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Ballinasloe, Ballygar
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	20, 33, 47, 61, 74, 87, 88
ITM CO-ORDINATES	583900E 744100N (central portion of feature)
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NOS. 40, 47	GSI BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NOS. 12, 15

Outline Site Description

The Suck River Callows is a long, flat site which includes the Suck River floodplain, and which extends for approximately 70 km from just southeast of the village of Creggs to the town of Shannonbridge. On the Galway side of the river, the site averages about 0.5 km in width though in places is up to 1.5 km wide

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

The Suck River flows entirely across land underlain by bedrock of Lower Carboniferous limestone. The callows themselves are Quaternary in age, having formed in marshy conditions as part of the floodplain of the Suck River in the region since deglaciation, or since 10,000 years ago.

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

The site has extensive areas of callow, or seasonally flooded, semi-natural lowland wet grassland, along both sides of the river. The callows are mainly too soft for intensive farming but are used for hay or silage or for summer grazing. Other habitats of smaller area which occur alongside the river include lowland dry grassland, freshwater marshes, reedbeds and wet woodland.

Along most of its length the site is bordered by raised bogs, now mostly exploited for peat, with some hummocks and esker ridges, and knolls of limestone bedrock.

Site Importance – County Geological Site

The Suck River Callows is an extensive area of lowland semi-natural grassland and associated aquatic habitats, despite much drainage works in recent years. The callows are known to support nationally important populations of Whooper Swan, Wigeon and Lapwing, and the site has been designated a proposed NHA (site code 000222) and SAC/SPA (site code 004097). As the callows exist due to the geomorphological and hydrogeological process of repeated fluvial flooding, the locality is ranked as a County Geological Site.

Management/promotion issues

Listing the callows as a County Geological Site gives recognition to the geomorphological and hydrogeological foundation of the biodiversity importance. As it is a dynamic system, controlling flooding is neither easy nor advisable. As with any geomorphological process based site, it must be remembered that these are dynamic environments and the flooding is a natural and unpredictable development.



Looking across the Suck River into the Galway Callows at Ballyforan Bridge.



The dry callows (August 2018) in Gortananny Townland.



The same (flooded) callows as above in Gortananny, November 2009.



A marshy portion of the callows in Tully Townland, near Ballygar.

