

GALWAY - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

NAME OF SITE	Summerville Lough
Other names used for site	Lake Summerville
IGH THEME	IGH1 Karst, IGH16 Hydrogeology
TOWNLAND(S)	Mountsilk, Templemoyle, Creggauns, Summerville, Moylough, Moylough More
NEAREST TOWN/VILLAGE	Moylough
SIX INCH MAP NUMBER	45
ITM CO-ORDINATES	560400E 750000N (centre of lake)
1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NOS. 39, 46	GS1 BEDROCK 1:100,000 SHEET NO. 11

Outline Site Description

Summerville Lough is a relatively small, permanent lake, with an associated raised bog and sand and gravel ridges, situated about 2 km northwest of Moylough in east Galway.

Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type

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

Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest

Summerville Lough is quite shallow, with extensive patches of rush near the centre and on the margins. The lake is flanked at the northwest and north by an esker and sands and gravels, at the east by an expanse of raised peat, and at the south by a ridge of glacial till.

Summerville Lough is set within a belt of lakes in east Galway which have karstic influences; many are ephemeral lakes or turloughs, but others have interactions with subsurface conduits in varying ways.

A swallow hole occurs at the southeastern edge of the peat flanking the lake basin, just north of Moylough Castle. The water sinking into this swallow hole was dye-traced in 2011, and the water emerged at public water supply springs at Barnaderg and (adjacent) 'mid-Galway' springs, almost 10 km to the southwest, in Derreen Townland. The lake therefore drains at high water levels into this swallow hole and subsurface, and *via* conduits, to the distant southwest.

Site Importance – County Geological Site

This is a lake that is being considered by the National Parks and Wildlife Service for designation as a potential NHA (site code 001319). As an ecological habitat it is important, with whooper swan wildfowl and otters residing here. Geologically it is certainly of County Geological Site importance owing to the long distance the sinking water traced from its basin travels underground: an impressive 10 Km.

Management/promotion issues

Much of the lake shore is on private farmland and not suitable for visiting, but there is access along the western shoreline, for fishing and picnicking and general viewing of the lake. A signboard here explaining the complex hydrology of the general region might prove useful.



Summerville Lough, August 2018. Viewed from the west.



Patches of common club rush (also known as lakeshore bulrush) along the northwestern edge of Summerville Lough.



The dry, peaty basin at the eastern end of Summerville Lough, November 2011.



Detail of the swallow hole east of the lake basin, November 2011.

