

Count Mayo

6th – 15th July 2009

A Greentours Tour Report

by Terry Underhill

Day 1 Monday 6th July to Knock & Cong!

Mischievous leprechauns upset some of the flights from the UK yet one way or another we were all together at Knock Airport shortly before 4.30pm. We were soon on the N17 heading south. Everything looked exceptionally green, with Meadowsweet dominating the roadside verges. The roads were exceptionally wet as we followed in the wake of heavy rain. Neale and Cong were quickly reached and after a little circular tour because of the one-way system, Ryan's Hotel in the Main Street was found, with a useful car park at the rear. The Hotel stands in the County of Mayo, but there is a pub just a matter of meters down the road being half in County Mayo and half County Galway.

As there were no shops or cafeteria open at the Airport, clients were promised coffee and tea as soon as we arrived. These were served in the bar as soon as we had taken our luggage up to our rooms.

In the meantime Michael Kingdon, a keen conservationist, had arrived at Terry's invitation, and they pored over maps while the rest of the group relaxed and became acquainted. Despite there being a lot of customers we found a table for six and enjoyed our meals - all a-la-carte - tasty and beautifully presented.

After supper Michael wondered if anyone fancied a walk. On seeing that it was raining , if only slightly, the ladies decided that they would leave it to Terry and David to join Michael. Just up the road is a ruined priory with a very modern Catholic church next door. A walk among a mixture of trees including a large pear and ancient yews which had been pollarded many years ago, and were reputed to be as old as the 13th century priory, led to the River Cong. On an ancient bridge we watched despite the diminishing light and drizzle, trout rising, swallows, swifts and bats. The path led into a wood, containing many specimen trees, especially redwoods and silver firs, and under planted with laurel. The only noise was the nearby river bubbling and talking to itself. Once a large estate, the path led to a castellated building, now a hotel and once owned by the Guinness family. The remnants of the evening light shining on the wide shallow river made a perfect picture, which even included a little blue sky. This unfortunately quickly disappeared and it began to rain as we walked back along the hotel drive to our hotel.

Day 2 Tuesday 7th July Moore House & Lough Carra

Some of us ordered the 'full monty' after bowls of cereals. Departure was at 9.30am allowing for members of the group to do a little personal shopping. Fenland either side of the road while still a couple of kilometers from our destination, Lough Carra car park, situated below Moore Hall, promised well, but driving towards a blackened sky, threatening rain was a little disconcerting. Our spirits reached fever pitch as we pulled into the Lough side parking area, as drifts of pink and white spikes of orchids could be seen. For the next couple of hours we had intermittent periods of drizzle, short heavy showers and sunshine, the periods being warm enough to bring out numerous ringlets, and at lunch time a freshly hatched Pearl-bordered Fritillary. The orchids were mostly *Dactylorhiza maculata*, but close examination revealed *Dactylorhiza fuchsii* and the pure white *Dactylorhiza okellyi* all intermixed, in grassy patches between a wide range of hummocks of grass and sedges. The area, once part of the lough until the water level dropped, is a calcareous marl and ideal for these orchids and hundreds of spikes of *Epipactis palustris* and a moderate number of fragrant *Gymnadenia conopsea*. There appeared to be three main groups of fragrant orchids - narrow, medium and broad labellum. We also found a few *Ophrys apifera* and *Ophrys insectifera*. The wet marl was perfect for multiplying *Pinguicula vulgaris* and young trees. The whole area will soon become woodland as acorns, probably regurgitated by *Corvidae*, along with wind blown ash and sycamore keys are now germinating across the area. The edge of the lake supported huge patches of Common Club-rush, Common Reed and numerous Great Fen Sedges. On the water were a few Gadwall, some Coots and a Little Grebe brought to our attention by David. A few Common Terns ducked and weaved their way across the lough. Every where there were iridescent Common Blue Damselflies while nearer the water's edge the much larger blue libellulas dashed to and fro with one or two larger ones looking very much like Emperors. The drive up to Moore Hall was taken while the weather was generally dull and wet, although a couple of times the dark tunnel became attractive when the sun found a break in the clouds. Moore Hall destroyed by fire is now a highly protected building as it is home to a large colony of Lesser Horseshoe Bats. On our return, just as we reached the bottom of the drive the heavens opened again, which was a good excuse to make use of the toilets by the main car park at the bottom of the drive. The heaviest shower was while we were by a monument commemorating members of the Moore family standing against the British, erected by the Old IRA in 1964. On the roadside walls grew large clumps of *Asplenium ruta-muraria* and *trichomanes*, with 60-70cm tall plants of *Prunella vulgaris* at their base. A close examination of orange-brown foliated goat willows revealed that virtually all the leaves had most of their tissue eaten away with just the cuticle left which was ginger-brown. Intermittent showers accompanied us on the short woodland walk to a grave and tomb of the Moore family with an area behind with little hummocks and rocks some with the occasional introduced plant nearby, such as *bergenia*, marking the graves of non baptised children.

Terry's picnic spread was laid out in the back of the vehicle with the covered area at the back of the toilets close at hand should it rain.

We were just about to pack the food away when Michael Kingdon joined us and we re-lived with him some of the morning's botanical highlights, until he suggested that we might like a

trip across the Lough in his dingy with an outboard engine to one of the islands - Hog Island. Terry, Doreen and Judith accepted his offer while David and Margaret wanted to continue pottering about or relaxing in the car.

Michael skillfully negotiated over rocks just beneath the surface and eventually found a little landing place on the island. Since his last visit the area had become exceptionally overgrown with trees and shrubs, including young Aspen and Spindle, making it very difficult to penetrate. However with a little ducking and pushing through the undergrowth and trampling on a ground cover of ivy which hosted numerous spikes of Ivy Broomrape, we still did not manage to find any Birdsnest Orchids, which are known to thrive there. Just before rejoining his boat we spent a little time examining life under the rocks, finding water lice, caddis flies and a very active water spider.

On the return trip we passed a small island built on stones placed there over a thousand years ago on which some one lived with a protective tower and a twisting narrow causeway just below the surface, and finally a very sandy corner with an attractive beach.

Arriving at Cong the tourist shop was still open so the ladies rushed in for various purchases. It is more a shop than a tourist information centre. We all met up again for supper in the bar at 7.30 retiring to our rooms at about 9.15. What an exciting and productive first full day!

Day 3 Wednesday 8th July Keel River Valley

It only took Doreen a couple of minutes at the nearby Post office to get some stamps, so we were able to leave after another hearty breakfast, just a couple of minutes after 9.0am. As we drove through Neale with a ruined church to our left, Judith queried a square, stepped limestone monument in a field to our right. We decided to investigate, and took a side road, where a passer-by in-between half choking with a cold and being dragged around by a strong impatient large dog satisfied our curiosity. It appears that during the terrible Irish potato famine, a benefactor land owner employed, and no doubt managed to feed many local families. The men built the monument with local stone, and probably were responsible for all the quality dry stone walls around all the local fields. They also built a folly-like temple where the women made lace. Nearby was a spring reached by about 10 stone steps, and protected by a dry-stone wall, for which stones with a slight curve had been selected.

We passed quickly through Ballinrobe taking the main N84 road towards Castlebar. This was our first encounter of limestone pavement. Everywhere were clumps of *Rosa spinosissima*, some still with single white blooms, but the majority were developing hips. Cracks were ideal for *Spleenworts*, *Wood Sage* and very healthy-looking *Rusty-back Ferns*. *Antennaria* and *Thyme* were in abundance, as was the tall, lax, *Wall Lettuce*. We found *Aquilegia* in fruit, and mounds, often with a base of sphagnum-type moss, which hosted *Calluna vulgaris*, *Erica cinerea* and often the lousewort, *Pedicularis sylvatica*, and *Dactylorhiza ericetorum* - a close relative of *Dactylorhiza maculata*, but very pale and with more delicate markings.

We took a little track to the lough side. *Gymnadenia conopsea*, some very fragrant, and pristine *Epipactis palustris* vied for our attention. A single strong purple *Dactylorhiza incarnata*, flourished on a mound directly above the water edge. At the waters edge we found hundreds of white, doughnut-like lumps of jelly about 10cm across floating just below the surface. Mike Kingdon told us there were *Ophyrdium versatile*, a eukaryotic single-celled ciliate from the kingdom Protocista that forms gelatinous colonies. Colonies of *Ophyrdium* are found 3-10 feet deep in the photic zone of slightly acidic bogs and ponds. The photic zone is the portion of water where sunlight is able to penetrate. Colonies may be lying on top of the sediment in shallow waters, drifting in the water column or attached to aquatic plants such as milfoil (*Myriophyllum*) of pondweed (*Potamogeton*). Ringlets, both large and small flitted about. A short distance on the road back towards Ballinrobe we took the first turning on our left. Just less than a km down this lane there is a notice board welcoming visitors to Kilkeeran, describing local wild life including otters. We parked by a ruined church, where the graveyard is still in regular use and tried our luck at the bottom of a field, by Lough Carra, hoping with Terry's scope we might see otters - we were out of luck, So we returned to the parked vehicle, but not before getting close up views of a Black-tailed skimmer dragonfly.

By a slipway into Lough Carra was a perfect place for a picnic, with some flat, small raised areas and a number of rocks suitable for sitting on. Although numerous we were not to find a new orchid species. New to our list were *Angelica*, Marsh *Epilobium* and red and yellow forms of Kidney vetch. Just below the slipway a pair of Tufted Ducks showed off their fishing skills, while Comic terns swooped over the nearby lough. Returning and crossing over the Keel River we took the first road on our left. A short distance down here was another area of sheets of limestone. After a brief wander we drove to the end - another Private notice. Here was a 'Members Only' sign leading to a boat club car park. It did not say what club one had to be a member of, so all being members of one society or another we drove down, looked for otters and photographed scenery with boats in front. Doreen found a plant of Water forget-me-not.

From there our journey to Cong went without a hitch, and we agreed to meet up again at 5.30, allowing just time for a cup of tea or a visit to the local antique shop. Terry sat outside the hotel bringing his plant check list up to date in between watching a Dipper walking under water in the nearby river Cong until it was disturbed by a couple of fishermen. Margaret was keen for us to do one of the Cong nature trails so for 90 min we walked over 3km in the nearby forest, the trail commencing just over the monk's river bridge. Periodically a specimen tree was labeled. Most notable were very tall and straight specimens of both North American redwoods and Monterey pines. We arrived back just in time for a wash and brush up before our evening meal.

Day 4 Thursday 9th July Buckaun

We found ourselves on a narrow road looking down on a side arm of Lough Mask which turned out to be a gem of a road. At every twist and turn, rise and fall, there was a view worth photographing. And, when we stopped to look at a plant or take in a particular view, there

were always many plants worthy of our attention. To begin with there were many different ferns including *Blechnum spicant* and *Osmunda regalis*, both having separate fertile fronds. Bog pimpernel, *Anagallis tenella*. could be found in shades from delicate pink to a rosy-red, likewise *Erica tetralix* which grew in abundance. *Calluna vulgaris*, sometimes named the He Heath being good for grazing animals, was just coming into flower, whereas, *Erica cinerea*, known as the She Heath, being of poorer quality for grazing produced patches of bright carmine. Much to our delight we were discovering floriferous plants of *Daboecia cantabrica*. *Pinguicula vulgaris* had finished flowering with many plants displaying ripening seed heads on long flower stalks, while all three species of Sundew, *Drosera rotundifolia*, *intermedia* and *anglica* were about to burst into flower. Every moist patch hosted short golden-yellow spikes of Bog Asphodel, or deep orange where they were ageing. It also seemed possible to find every known form of *Dactylorhiza maculata* from the thousands blooming on the roadside banks and spilling across the hillsides. Mention must be made of the magnificent white and pink flowered plants of *Lavatera trimestris* growing where we joined the track.

Eventually having stopped for views of peat harvesting in its various stages and when just about to join the main road we crossed a broad, photogenic stream where iridescent green bodied *Calopteryx* damselflies flitted, their dark wing patches making them look like small helicopters when in flight. On reaching the main road we turned left but within a short time took the narrow, steep and winding L16005 finding at a recognised viewpoint half a picnic table, The view was breathtaking, so the table cloth was spread out on the picnic bench and covered with an array of food. Another banquet picnic was in operation with a fantastic view down Lough Nafooeey.

The roadsides now were dominated by hedges of bright red *Fuchsia magellanica*, many with fragrant honeysuckle intertwined, and with fluffy heads of Meadowsweet at their base. - Michael Kingdon had marked an area on Terry's map as a possible place to find the Irish St John's wort. The track down to the Lough Mask margin was raised above fenland sprinkled with white hairy heads of *Eriophorum*.

Our destination was heavily grazed, the sheep having produced a green lawn, almost good enough for Wimbledon, although somewhat bumpy, and had nibbled away the Irish St John's wort. A new find was the diminutive Lesser Skullcap. In one place the underlying rock was exposed. A pudding stone conglomerate, part of which showed the smoothing by glacial movement a long time ago.

No Irish St John's Wort here or at our next little track, where at the bottom the Mask Lough fishing club moored their rowing boats. Some of the boats looked fairly new, but many were full to overflowing with rain water, confirming what some fishermen had told us earlier that the mayflies were reducing dramatically in numbers and fishing was bad - just when were these boats last used? A stream produced various water plants including the Water Plantain with its lax spikes of 3-petalled white flowers. Nearby close to the lough margin in shallow bog were the low growing pink flowered Lesser Water Plantain.

David had already had considerable practice at opening and shutting gates, as we passed through yet another, aiming for a mountain tarn on the side of Buckaun. The very acid grass slopes with masses of wet areas was very poor floristically, although we did find a few plants of the diminutive *Pinguicula lusitanica* making the slog up the stony track worthwhile.

As the track surface deteriorated and narrowed, we had decided to pull into a parking bay and stretch our legs. The tarn seemed to be always over yet another ridge, so we eventually returned to our vehicles to make the homeward journey.

We then took a route over Ferry bridge, a superb spot with ample parking, picnic tables, dry stone walls and views of two sections of the lough. We were still on the edge of Joyce's Country and detoured a little to take in more of the scenery. We arrived back at Cong before 6.0pm leaving time for shopping, showering, etc before our evening meal, followed by a long session with the plant lists which already had over 250 marked as seen.

Day 5 Friday 10th July Cong area

Oh dear! No sun shining into my bedroom as I wound up the blind, instead the sky was a pale grey brown deepening towards the west. Shortly after leaving Cong drops of rain fell on the windscreen, increasing in intensity as we reached one of the only sections of the Cong canal where it is crossed by a road. Its construction turned out to be a complete disaster. A channel 15-20m wide and 10-15m deep was cut through the limestone making a canal between Lough Mask and Lough Corrib around the 1840's, which did provide paid work for some workers during the terrible countrywide famine. If you had enough money you could buy enough food to keep yourself, and perhaps your family alive. As a social item it was therefore a success but as a commercial venture aiming at linking the sea with the mainland it was a complete disaster as the limestone base is porous in parts, and the water which flows at a dangerous pace from Lough Mask disappears within a short time, with sections completely dry, except during flood conditions. There is no tow path just a walk built on some of the rock spoil for about 1km until the way is blocked by a strongly wired gate and an unfriendly notice. Masses of Rusty-back Ferns, and a number of *Dactylorhiza maculata* forms including *fuchsii* were the only plants of note, although close examination of the flowers of Wood Sage, made us realise that we should appreciate it more than we do.

Now a little soggy we made our way to the headland at the south east corner of Lough Mask. Here the Cong Canal begins. Being moderately heavily grazed by sheep and cattle, most of the taller vegetation had been nibbled away or trampled beyond recognition. There were many wet flushes between rows of black, water-worn and pitted limestone outcrops. *Alisma plantago-aquatica*, Water plantain, was producing many broad and lax heads with masses of small 3-petalled white flower, as well as the low-growing *Baldelia ranunculoides* with pale pink 3-petalled blooms. We had a short stroll, and were just about to leave when a pair of Mute Swans landed on a nearby inlet. Shortly after we noticed a fast moving blob of white moving very fast on the water, heading for the two swans. In a very short time it had covered 7-800m with its

wings raised to make it look huge and its head low down making its beak and head act like the bow of a ship breaking the water surface. When this ferocious looking bird was about 200m from the other two swans, they took off, flying above us and away, and the white fast moving object changed into a graceful slowly moving swan.

There was nowhere to shelter for our picnic lunch, so we decided to try our luck on the headland directly to the north of us. At Cartron, the local anglers have a club house, but although the toilets were open, which we made use of, the two members about to take a boat on the Lough did not have a key to the main room. So we looked through the window at the padded chairs and tables before moving off to the pier, well it is really a stone jetty, at nearby Caher. The rain had just about stopped, so the food was laid out in the boot of the car and we stood around eating. Tufted Duck with ducklings, some Common Terns and a lone Cormorant were spotted, but no hint of any Otters or other birds, despite carefully scanning the lough with the bird scope.

How about returning to Cong, and doing our packing, and then having an early meal before meeting up with Michael for his proposed Wild Beast Woodland walk at 9.0pm? The proposed resolution was unanimously agreed, therefore it was a non-stop drive back to Ryan's Hotel. It was still drizzling and the clouds were low when at 9.0pm David, Terry and Doreen, met up with Michael Kingdon and his ten year old daughter, Heather, already a keen and observant naturalist. Our rendezvous was the entrance to the wood south of the Keel River. Michael led the way among trees and mounds, up and down hollows, with all the ground cover under the trees being a carpet of moss and the occasional fern. Various tracks criss-crossed grass rides, until we came to some open grassy areas where we had varying quality views of Fallow Deer, some with very young fawns. Heather and Michael regularly checked droppings indicating sex and age of the deer. At times we had the scent of fox and stink-horn fungi. Despite it becoming exceedingly dark, Michael knew the exact spot where we would see Birdsnest orchids and a patch of 11 *Monotropa* - the latter being exceptionally rare in Ireland. A single hole was the set of a young male badger, recently turfed out of the family. It was not the right weather for sightings of Red Squirrel and Pine Marten, known to frequent this wood. After over two hours we made our thanks and returned to Cong.

Day 6 Saturday 11th July Transfer day to Keel, Achill Island

Having had breakfast and packed the luggage we set off for Achill Island, under a threatening sky. Perhaps because the weather man had given us a moderately bad time yesterday, he hadn't the heart to 'turn on the tap', instead a very watery sun tried to break through the grey cloud cover. Ahead the clouds were low on the mountains but the horizon was brighter, but somehow or another the brightness was always a few valleys ahead.

We made for Commamona and on to Killary Harbour. Time to stretch our legs and visit the

woollen shop and make use of their toilets. On the car park wall at the head of the lough are three notices, 'Local Flowers', 'Local Tides' and 'Local Birds'. Terry went on the beach bringing back specimens of *Cochlearia officinalis*, *Atriplex patula* and *prostrata*, *Chenopodium* and Thrift. *Erica erigena* was listed as a plant found in the immediate vicinity but Terry could not locate it, but he did find a clump of St Patrick's cabbage, *Saxifraga spathularis*. About 2km after leaving the car park we stopped to scan the water, and located a single Lesser Black-backed Gull and a Grey Heron. The area around the layby produced trailing *Hypericum humifusum*, *Lysimachia nemorum*, Devil's-bit Scabious and a number of 'little white jobs! The 'Local Flower' notice board had *Gunnera* listed as a wild flower of the area, mentioning that it is a native of South America, and is becoming a nuisance weed. - this is an understatement as in places it covers cliff faces, waste ground or creeps across bogs up mountain sides and any waste ground or stream side, and roadside verges it can find. The number of plants seen growing increased progressively after leaving Killary Harbour.

We think that Judith was telling little porkies when she indicated that she would like a paddle or even a swim when we reached the coast, because when we did she did not turn into a 'bathing belle' in fact far from it, as the sky was much greyer and the wind was increasing in intensity. Our first coastal stop was where a huge bank of flattish pebbles had been formed by many years of Atlantic storms. Scentless mayweed flourished among some pebbles, but otherwise the area was barren. The pebbles overflowed into a field where we noticed some were covered in tar. The most noticeable plants were *Veronica becca-bunga*, a garden-worthy cerise pink Purple Loosestrife, Fools Watercress and *Sparganiums*.

We tried our luck down another coastal track, which reached the beach so the end was soft sand. There was a lot of flotsam on the beach and some distance away a few gulls and Oystercatchers. The best plant was a large lone specimen of *Cakile maritima*. It was now too windy to picnic so we decided to try yet another beach. Huts close to the beach seen from a distance turned out to be portable toilets and recycling containers. White Strand is obviously very popular on a warm summers day but not on a cool July, with the wind whipping in from the Atlantic ocean with nothing to stop it between us and North America. . However we were sheltered a little from the wind and the car was parked so as to give extra shelter to the picnic when laid out on the sheep nibbled green sward.

Judith then came up with the brilliant idea of us finding a warm coffee shop. As we reached the centre of Louisburgh there was a sign indicating a coffee house 200 meters down the road on the left from the town square - within nano-seconds we were heading that way. It was a mad dash under a relentless cloud burst to find warmth and 4 coffees and a hot chocolate for Margaret. Under normal circumstances the view on our route would be spectacular, instead the clouds were low, the rain was relentless and a very strong wind buffeted the car.

Crossing to Achill Island the wind was exceptionally strong, but the rain had suddenly stopped. Checks were made about Sunday opening hours of supermarkets (10-4) being the norm, before a short drive to Keel and Roskeel Hotel. We were given a very warm welcome by the proprietor

and his wife, but the wind and rain began again in earnest as we tried to unload our luggage. Terry worked on his notes while the rest of the group had a welcome cup of tea. We had a table booked at the local restaurant for 6.30 so there was really only a little time to wash and brush up and partly unpack our luggage. We drove to The Chalet, a local sea food restaurant. As it was the Achill Island Seafood Festival Weekend, there was a special meal available, with four very fishy dishes, An opportunity to taste 20 different sea foods, the first two courses were with a selection of sauces and the other two with a selection of vegetables - Doreen decided to have a salmon dish followed by mixed berries and cream, while the rest of us took up this unique multi fish offer.

The day's route was through exceptionally beautiful scenery, despite the weather. One sad note has to be the spread of aliens. *Fuchsia magellanica*, of South American origin which is now a colourful feature of many highways and byways. Some lengths of road has the fuchsia and everything else including brambles suffocated by Japanese knotweed, and on our route, another South American introduction *Gunnera tinctoria* thriving on roadside verges, alongside streams, spreading up the mountain sides, and even smothering waste ground on lowlands and in towns and villages. In one or two places the larger-leaved *Gunnera manicata* had escaped from gardens. *Montbretia/Crocsmia* is now rampant in some areas. Sadly I feel there is a Western Irish ecological time bomb ticking, and ticking fast. Bracken is spreading everywhere as agricultural practices change.

Day 7 Sunday 12th July Achill Island and Croaghaun

An overnight gale left the sea with many large white horses, and, although somewhat abated, dawn broke with a moderate wind, no rain, but a cloud base just sitting on the top of the local mountains. However there were patches of blue sky and the sun was penetrating them, so it was fingers crossed and down to breakfast. By the time the ladies had done a little shopping in the Keel Coffee and Craft shop and Terry had topped up the picnic 'hamper' at the local supermarket, the sun was shining all over the island with the exception of the three main mountains which had their tops in the dark clouds. Our first stop was Keel Harbour, where a Ringed Plover continued to hop within a few meters of our car. *Potamogeton natans* filled the roadside gullies, and the heaths and heathers on the well grazed headland are only 1 or 2 centimeters high, mainly through being so exposed as well as nibbled.

We then drove west through Dooagh. Our road bypassed this and began to climb up onto Croaghaun until it reached a small reservoir, once a mountain tarn - Lough Accorymore. Donning raincoats, just in case the weather changed we crossed the dam and made our way up the side of the first hill. Carefully examining all rocky outcrops we passed and those on the mountain side failed to reveal anything out of the ordinary. The orchids were all short and dumpy, pink or white, and seemed to be variants of *Dactylorhiza maculata* and *majalis*. Doreen found a single plant of *Pedicularis sylvatica*, otherwise it was very much like a Dartmoor flora, unless you were really into sedges and mosses.

It was nearly lunch time when we returned to our vehicle. The cliff side road to Keen strand is exceptionally dramatic, and very popular on a sunny Sunday. Just as we were going down towards the car parks Terry spotted a place a little way up the roadside bank, out of the wind, with a superb panoramic view. It was so sheltered that this was the only place we saw butterflies that day - they were Cabbage Whites and Ringlets.

After lunch we used the nearby toilets, where alongside our parking spot was a fine clump of *Erica tetralix alba*. We then drove down to Keel Strand car park making a quick turn around. Back at Keel we took a turning to the left, part of an 'Atlantic Coast Tour', making a non stop visit to the Deserted Village either side of a church and graveyard.

Approaching Dooagh Dumha Acha we took a turning to the left, close to the coast, stopping just before a mini harbour and jetty. Some large clumps of fragrant Apple mint lined the road. We were at the foot of Slievemore mountain, and looking at its steep sides wondered just how many people safely climb it. While by the jetty, Margaret spotted a plant in a hollow of a pile of rocks. It turned out to be the rare St Patrick's Cabbage - *Saxifraga spathularis*.

Our final destination for the day was the road and track to Altderg. This area has been used extensively for peat cutting, and we were able to take shots of the various stages of cutting and drying as well as the re-establishment of the flora. Terry walked across to the coast noting that over 1.5m of peat had over many years been harvested, and also watched 4 Sandwich Terns diving in to the sea. We decided to go Chinese for the evening having earlier booked a table for 5 just down the lane and around the corner from our hotel. Well fed and watered we strolled back to our rooms and bed.

Day 8 Monday 13th July to the Belmullet Peninsula

There was a lot of moisture in the air and the clouds just clipped the top of the mountains when we left the Roskeel House shortly before 9.30am

A quick stop for bananas and tomatoes at the stores while Doreen posted a few postcards, then it was down through the hamlet of Dookinelly. The tide was in and all the beach was covered, instead the waves beat against a large bank of pebbles. Sheep had trimmed the turf to a garden-worthy sward, but hollows held a tangle of moisture lovers such as *Anagallis tenella*, *Ranunculus flammula*, *Drosera rotundifolia* on sphagnum and numerous sedges and rushes. On the steep grass slopes the pink heads of *Erica tetralix* were abundant. At the far end, by the Holy Well, we watched Fulmars weaving and diving, their nests on the cliffs. Gullies on the cliff and dark green patches on Mweeln Mountain were *Gunnera tinctoria*.

We then moved on to the eastern side of the mountain where a steep hard surface road makes its way to the top of the mountain where there are a number of radio and television masts. As the westerly winds hit the mountain they condensed into clouds which at times lifted on the leeward side to give stupendous views. 10 out of 10 for the views.

We then took the longer coastal Atlantic Route going to Achill Island's most southerly point. A route and scenery not to be missed. Our bonus was a group of Whimbrel.

Shortly after crossing the Achill Sound it began to rain, and continued to do so, if only lightly as we rounded Bellacragher Bay and took the N59 north towards Bangor. We were amazed at just how much of the countryside we were traveling among has been for centuries used for cutting peat. We noticed that wisps of smoke came from the chimneys of many houses and at times we got the characteristic smell of burning peat. At Ballycroy we pulled into No 39 café restaurant for coffee. We had a giant pot of coffee hot scones and butter, custard sandwich biscuits and slices of currant bread with jam.

A detour took us to Carrowmore Lake and a picnic site but it was raining again. About 3km further on was another parking area, which we reached just as it stopped raining, where, overlooking the lake we had our picnic. Margaret only had a little fruit so she wandered around while the rest of us indulged! Margaret, much to our delight, found a large drift of *Erica erigena*, obviously out of flower, growing, much to Terry's surprise, in fairly moist lake-side conditions. After lunch we drove back to a stretch of road near the first picnic place as orchids had been noticed when passing a little earlier. They turned out to be forms of *Dactylorhiza maculata*. Scabious was soon to flower. The sneezewort, *Achillea ptarmica*, was another new one for our list. Moving off we were soon at Belmullet, where we were to stay for the remaining two days of the trip. It was a little too early to sign into the Western Strand Hotel, so we drove to the far eastern part of the island peninsular. A short walk to the coast just below the working harbour itself below Glash Point produced a Giant Catsear, Scentless Mayweed and some ferns to add to our list. We all supported Doreen's request to visit the lighthouse of Ballyglass, where a notice indicated that the derelict lighthouse keepers cottage had been purchased and permission granted for its complete renovation. Sea campion and yet more fantastic views were our rewards.

Back at the Western Strand we were allocated our rooms, and shortly afterwards tucked into tasty tender duck followed by chocolate cake or strawberry cheesecake and cream, washed down with coffee. No wonder we all needed a short walk after supper, down the main street to the sea.

Day 9 Tuesday 14th July Belmullet

It only took a few minutes to buy enough bread for the day's picnic and we were on our way to the southern-most point, Blacksod Point where separate notice boards give information of the involvement of the lighthouse weather station giving vital information about the weather conditions for the D-Day landing, and also the fate of two of three Spanish ships escaping from the Armada battle. Our short excursion looking at the maritime flora turned out to be our best bird watching time as a Puffin, a Curlew and some Cormorants flew by, gulls flew overhead

and just off shore Common and Sandwich Terns were diving for fish, one bringing back sand eels and feeding its youngster on a rock near to us. The cracks between the tarmac and stone parking area and harbour wall was home to large sprawling plants of yellow-flowered Kidney vetch. Taking the road westward from Blacksod Point to Fallmore we crossed moorland, where, on the highest point, giving extensive views is a car park and an information board about an outdoor natural stone art exhibition, one of which was a circle of pillar like local rock, which was nearby. As well as the typical acid moorland flora a moist hollow had sheets of Brooklime, and good patches of Bog Pimpernel and Sundews, with the area dotted with the pink heads of *Centaurium erythraea*. We had a session of identifying some of the Eyebrights before moving downhill to Fallmore churchyard and the coast. With the sun shining we walked along the corner of the beach and up onto the Machair, where the ground was carpeted with golden yellow *Galium verum* producing a delightful fragrance. Huge clumps of the glaucous blue Sea Holly asked to be photographed with the beach and blue sky as a background.

Taking the road from the church car park to a nearby Holy Well we made an abrupt stop as the distinctive colour and shape of Pyramidal Orchids appeared above the mixture of grass, bedstraws and red *Bartsia*. The Machair from here, with short sheep nibbled turf, was sprinkled with nodding blue bells of *Campanula rotundifolia*.

We took various dead end tracks around parts of Cross Lough, stopping many times. The shore line over the road from a farm house was rich in orchids, including some good heads of *Epipactis palustris*, and also produced our first plants of Grass of Parnassus in flower. *Achillea ptarmica* had large heads of white flowers.

It was well past our lunchtime when we pulled into Curraghboy quayside, parking in front of an expensive bungalow, the owners having taken possession of the grass area on the other side of the road from their garden, mowing the grass and putting a very large and expensive picnic bench by the harbour wall. Being a perfect place for a picnic, our last of the tour, and the land being public land, we made use of the bench. Only a small amount of food was left over, enough for a few snacks for the various homeward journeys tomorrow.

Another visit to Cross Lough and down to Cross Point where yet another ruined church stands guard over a church yard still in use, but judging by the lumps of rock without any hint of a name or date marking graves, the site has been in use for many centuries.

The brief walk on the dunes was not up to the standard of the earlier walk, although we did find *Glaux maritima* in flower for the first time, we all opted to drive back to Belmullet, and have a coffee before sorting out our packing at the Western Strand Hotel.

Showers, meals and a walk to the coast and harbour to photograph the setting sun on a row of cottages, ended a lovely sunny day full of superb scenery, with good birds and plants - a naturalists delight.

Day 9 Wednesday 15th July Departure

Terry was up and away before 4.0pm to drive Margaret to Knock Airport for an early flight, taking the main, but somewhat bumpy at times, route via Bangor, Crossmolina, Ballina, Foxford, and Swinford arriving back with enough time to rest a while before joining Doreen, Judith and David for breakfast.

With the car all packed, an operation not helped as both sides of the street, especially directly in front of the western strand hotel was parked with market stalls all selling clothes, we said goodbye to Belmullet at 10-am

We encountered sun, drizzle and torrential rain all in little bits as we drove via Bangor to Crossmolina, where we took the very scenic route to Pontoon crossing over a narrow section of Lough Conn to Foxford where we each had a bowl of soup and a chunk of bread and on to Knock Airport.

Systematic List Number 1 Flowers

- Day 1 Knock Airport - Cong - Riverside walk
- Day 2 Lough Carra - Moore Hall
- Day 3 Nr Church Island - Kilkeeran - Keel River - Cong forest trail
- Day 4 Joyce's Country - America - Lough Mask - Buckaun Mt. track
- Day 5 Cong Canal - Carra Lough - Inish Headland - Cartron - Caber Pier - Keel Woods
- Day 6 Travel - Killary Harbour - Dunes nr. Roonah - Achill Island - Keel
- Day 7 Achill Island - Croaghaun - Keem, Atlantic drive - Slievemore - Altderg
- Day 8 Trawmore Strand - Mweeln Mt. - Glash Light House - Belmullet
- Day 9 Blacksod Point - Fallmore - Cross Lough - Saleen Harbour
- Day 10 Crossmolina - Foxford - Knock Airport

POLYCOTYLEDON

CUPRESSACEAE

- Cupressus lawsoniana - Lawson's Cypress - 1-6, 8
- X Cupressocylaris leylandii - Leyland Cypress - 1-9 Hedge & screen
- Juniperus communis - Juniper - , 4
- Juniperus communis subsp nana - Prostrate Juniper - 3

PINACEAE

- Abies alba - Silver Fir - 1-3
- Larix decidua - European Larch - 3, 4, 8
- Picea abies - Norway Spruce - 2-5
- Pinus pinaster - Maritime Pine - Seen
- Pinus sylvestris - Scots Pine - 1-5, 7
- Pseudotsuga douglasii - Douglas Fir - 1-3
- Tsuga heterophylla - Western Red Cedar - 1-3

TAXACEAE

- Taxus baccata - Yew - 1, 3, 5, 6

DICOTYLEDON

ACERACEAE

- Acer campestre - Field Maple - 3
- Acer pseudoplatanus - Sycamore - 1-9

APIACEAE - UMBELLIFERAE

Angelica sylvestris - Wild Angelica - 3-4, 6-9
Anthriscus sylvestris - Cow Parsley - 4, 6
Apium nodiflorum - Fool's Watercress - 3, 6-9
Daucus carota - Wild Carrot - 2-4, 6, 8, 9
Eryngium maritimum - Sea Holly - 6, 9
Heracleum sphondylium - Hogweed
Oenanthe aquaticum - Hemlock water Dropwort
Sanicula europaea - Sancicle - 2

APOCYNACEAE

Vinca major - Greater Periwinkle - Seen
Vinca minor - Lesser Periwinkle - Seen

AQUIFOLIACEAE

Ilex aquifolium - Holly - 1-6

ARALIACEAE

Hedera helix - Ivy - 1-5, 8

ASTERACEAE/ COMPOSITAE

Achillea millefolium - Yarrow - 3-4, 6-9
Achillea ptarmica - Sneezewort - 8
Antennaria dioica - Mountain Everlasting - 3, 4
Arctium minus - Lesser Burdock - 1, 2, 4-7, 9
Artemisia vulgaris - Mugwort - 4
Bellis perennis - Daisy - 1-8
Carlina vulgaris - Carlina Thistle - 2, 3
Centaurea nemoralis - Lesser Knapweed - Seen
Centaurea nigra - Common Knapweed - 2-6, 8, 9
Cirsium arvense - Creeping Thistle - Seen often
Cirsium dissectum - Meadow Thistle - Seen
Cirsium palustre - Marsh Thistle - 1-5, 7-9
Cirsium vulgare - Spear Thistle - 4-8
Eupatorium cannabinum - Hemp Agrimony, Joe Pye Weed - 2, 3, 5, 9
Hypochaeris radicata - Catsear - Seen
Lapsana communis - Nipplewort - 1, 2, 5, 8, 9
Leontodon autumnalis - Autumn Hawkbit - 4
Leucanthemum vulgare - Ox-eye Daisy - 2-4, 6-9
Leucanthemum x superbum - Shasta daisy Seen - Garden escape
Matricaria discoidea - Pineappleweed - 2, 4

Mycelis muralis - Wall Lettuce - 3
Petasites hybridus - Butterbur - Seen often
Pilosella officinarum - Mouse-ear Hawkweed - 3-5, 7-9
Pilosella peleteriana - Shaggy Mouse-ear Hawkweed - Seen
Pulicaria dysenterica - Common Fleabane - Seen once
Senecio aquaticus - Marsh Ragwort - 4, 5, 8
Senecio jacobaea - Common Ragwort - 6-9
Senecio vulgaris - Groundsel - 2, 3, 5, 7
Solidago virgaurea - Goldenrod - 2
Sonchus arvensis - Field Sow-thistle - 4, 5, 9
Sonchus oleraceus - Smooth Sow-thistle - 2, 5, 7, 9
Tanacetum vulgare - Tansy - 1
Taraxacum officinale - Dandelion - 1, 3-6, 9
Tripleurospermum inodorum - Scentless Mayweed - 8, 9
Tussilago farfara - Coltsfoot - 1, 2

BALSAMINACEAE

Impatiens glandulifera - Himalayan Balsam - 7-9

BETULACEAE

Alnus glutinosa - Alder - 2-4, 6-9
Betula pendula - Silver Birch - 2-6
Betula pubescens - Downy Birch - 2
Carpinus betulus - Hornbeam - 2, 3

BORAGINACEAE

Myosotis laxa - Tufted Forget-me-not - Seen
Myosotis scorpioides - Water Forget-me-not - 3-5, 7, 8

BRASSICACEAE

Capsella bursa-pastoris - Shepherd's Purse - 2
Cakile maritima - Sea Kale - 6
Cardamine pratensis - Cuckoo Flower - Lady's Smock - 4-7
Cochlearia officinalis - Common Scurvygrass - 6, 8, 9
Hesperis matronalis - Dame's violet - Seen
Rorippa nasturtium-aquaticum - Watercress - 7, 9
Sisymbrium officinale - Hedge Mustard - Seen

BUDDLEJACEAE

Buddleja davidii - butterfly Bush - 1-7

CAMPANULACEAE

Campanula rotundifolia - Harebell - 3, 4, 9
Jasione montana - Sheepsbit - 4, 6-9

CAPRIFOLIACEAE

Lonicera periclymenum - Honeysuckle - 2-8
Sambucus nigra - Elder - 1-9
Symphoricarpos albus - Snowberry - 2
Viburnum lantana - Wayfaring Tree - 2
Viburnum opulus - Guelder Rose - 5

CARYOPHYLLACEAE

Cerastium fontanum - Common Mouse-ear - 2, 6, 8, 9
Honckenya peploides - Sea Sandwort - 6, 7, 9
Minuartia verna - Spring Sandwort - Seen
Sagina maritima - Sea Pearlwort - 6
Sagina procumbens - Procumbent Pearlwort - 6-7, 9
Sagina subulata - Heath Pearlwort - Seen
Stellaria media - Common Chickweed - 9
Stellaria palustris - Marsh Stitchwort - 4, 5, 8, 9
Stellaria uliginosa - Bog Stitchwort - 8

CELASTRACEAE

Euonymus europaeus - Spindle - 2, 3, 5

CHENOPODIACEAE

Atriplex patula - Common Orache - 6
Beta vulgaris ssp. *Maritima* - Sea Beet - Seen
Chenopodium album - Fat hen - Seen
Chenopodium bonus-henricus - Good King Henry - 6

CLUSIACEAE - HYPERICACEAE

Hypericum androsaemum - Tutsan - Seen occasionally
Hypericum calycinum - Rose of Sharon - Garden escape
Hypericum elodes - Marsh St. John's Wort - 4, 7, 8
Hypericum humifusum - Trailing St. John's Wort - 6
Hypericum x inodorum - Tall Tutsan - 6, 8
Hypericum perforatum - Perforate St. John's Wort - 2, 3, 5
Hypericum pulchrum - Slender St. John's Wort - 3
Hypericum tetrapterum - Square-stalked St. John's Wort - 4

CONVOLVULACEAE

Calystegia sepium - Hedge Bindweed - 2-7

Calystegia sepium ssp. *roseus* - Pink Hedge Bindweed - 1, 4, 6, 7

Convolvulus arvensis - Field Bindweed - 2, 5, 6, 9

CORYLACEAE

Corylus avellana - Hazel - 1-6, 8

CRASSULACEAE

Sedum acre - Biting Stonecrop - 3, 5, 7

Sedum album - White Stonecrop - 3

Sedum anglicum - English Stonecrop - 1, 6

Umbilicus rupestris - Navelwort - 3

DIPSACEAE

Knautia arvensis - Field Scabious - Seen a couple of times

Succisa pratensis - Devilsbit Scabious - 6

DROSERACEAE

Drosera anglica - Great Sundew - 4, 7, 8

Drosera intermedia - Oblong-leaved Sundew - 4, 7

Drosera rotundifolia - Round-leaved Sundew - 4, 7, 8

EMPETRACEAE

Empetrum nigrum - Crowberry - Seen once

ERICACEAE

Calluna vulgaris - Heather - He heath - 3, 4, 6-9

Daboecia cantabrica - St Dabeoc's Heath - 4, 6

Erica cinerea - Bell Heather, She Heath - 1, 3, 4, 6-9

Erica erigena - Irish heath, Mediterranean Heath - 8

Erica tetralix - Cross-leaved Heath - 4, 6-9

Rhododendron ponticum - Common rhododendron - 6, 8, 9

Vaccinium myrtillus - Billberry, Whin Berry - 2-6

FABACEAE

Anthyllis vulneraria - Kidney Vetch - 3, 8, 9

Cytisus scoparius - Broom - 4, 5

Lathyrus pratensis - Meadow Vetchling - 2-6, 8, 9

Lotus corniculatus - Birdsfoot Trefoil - 2-6, 8, 9

Lotus pedunculatus - Greater Birdsfoot Trefoil - Seen
Trifolium campestre - Hop Trefoil - 2-6, 9
Trifolium dubium - Lesser Trefoil - 3, 4
Trifolium pratense - Red Clover - 2-6, 9
Trifolium repens - White Clover - 2-6, 9
Ulex europaeus - Gorse - 1, 3-6, 9
Ulex gallii - Western Gorse - 8
Vicia cracca - Tufted Vetch - 1-7, 9

FAGACEAE

Fagus sylvatica - Beech - 1-3, 5, 6
Quercus robur - Pedunculate Oak - 2, 3

GENTIANACEAE

Blackstonia perfoliata - Yellow-wort 2, 3
Centaureum erythraea - Common Centaury - 2-9

GERANIACEAE

Geranium dissectum - Cut-leaved Cranesbill - 3-5
Geranium lucidum - Shining Cranesbill - Seen
Geranium robertianum - Herb Robert - 2-6

GUNNERACEAE

Gunnera manicata - Brazilian Giant Rhubarb - 4-7 Garden escape
Gunnera tinctoria - Chilean Giant Rhubarb - 4, 5-9

HIPPOCASTANACEAE

Aesculus hippocastanum - Horse Chestnut - 2-6

LAMIACEAE

Mentha aquatica - Water Mint - 2-5, 7, 9
Mentha x villosa - Apple Mint - 7
Prunella vulgaris - Self-heal, Carpenter's Friend - 2-6, 9
Scutellaria minor - Lesser Skullcap - 4, 8
Stachys palustris - Marsh Woundwort - 7-9
Stachys sylvatica - Hedge Woundwort - 2-4
Teucrium scordonia - Wood Sage - 2-5
Thymus polytrichus - Wild Thyme - 2-5, 9

LENTIBULARIACEAE

Pinguicula lusitana - Pale Butterwort - 4

Pinguicula vulgaris - Common Butterwort - 2-4, 7-9

LYTHRACEAE

Lythrum salicaria - Purple Loosestrife - 1-9

MALVACEAE

Lavatera arborea - Tree Mallow - 2-6

Lavatera trimestris - Rose Mallow 4, 6

Malva moschata - Musk Mallow - 2

Malva sylvestris - Common Mallow - 2, 8, 9

MENYANTHACEAE

Menyanthes trifoliata - Bogbean - 3, 4

MONOTROPACEAE

Monotropa hypopitys - Yellow Broomrape , 5

MYRICACEAE

Myrica gale - Bog Myrtle - 4, 6

NYMPHAEACEAE

Nuphar lutea - Yellow Water-lily - 3-6, 8

Nymphaea alba - White Water-lily - 3, 6

ONAGRACEAE

Chamerion angustifolium - Rosebay Willowherb, Fire Weed - 1, 2, 4-6, 8, 9

Circaea lutetiana - Enchanter's Nightshade - 2-4

Epilobium brunnescens - New Zealand Willowherb - 4, 6

Epilobium hirsutum - Great Willowherb, Codlins & Cream - 2-6, 8

Epilobium montanum - Broad-leaved Willowherb - 2, 5, 7, 8

Epilobium palustre - Marsh Willowherb - 3, 4, 7

Fuchsia magellanica - Fuchsia - 2-7, 9

OROBANCHACEAE

Orobanche hederæ - Ivy Broomrape - 2

OLEACEAE

Fraxinus excelsior - Ash - 1-6

Ligustrum vulgare - Wild Privet - 6-9

OXALIDACEAE

Oxalis acetosella - Wood Sorrel - 2, 3

PAPAVERACEAE

Papaver rhoeas - Common Poppy - 4

PLANTAGINACEAE

Plantago coronopus - Buckshorn Plantain - 6-9

Plantago lanceolata - Ribwort Plantain - 2-6, 8, 9

Plantago major - Greater Plantain - 2, 5, 7, 9

Plantago maritima - Sea Plantain - 2, 3, 6, 9

Plantago media - Hoary Plantain - 2, 4, 5, 7, 9

PLUMBAGINACEAE

Armeria maritima - Thrift - 6, 7, 9

POLYGALACEAE

Polygala serpyllifolia - Heath Milkwort - 4

Polygala vulgaris - Common Milkwort - 2-7

POLYGONACEAE

Fallopia sachalinensis - Giant Knotweed - 2-8

Oxyria digyna - Mountain Sorrel - 4-6, 8

Persicaria hydropiper - Watter-pepper - 4, 6, 7, 9

Persicaria lapathifolia - Pale Persicaria - 7

Persicaria maculosa - Redleg - 3, 8, 9

Persicaria wallichii - Himalayan Knotweed - 2-6

Polygonum aviculare - Knotgrass - Seen

Rumex acetosa - Common Sorrel - 4-9

Rumex acetosella - Sheep's Sorrel - 4-9

Rumex conglomeratus - Clustered Dock - 8

Rumex crispus - Curled Dock - 2, 4, 5, 7

Rumex hydrolapathum - Water Dock - Seen

Rumex obtusifolius - Broad-leaved Dock - 2-4, 6, 7, 9

Rumex sanguineus - Wood Dock - 2, 5

PRIMULACEAE

Anagallis arvensis - Scarlet Pimpernel - 3, 7

Anagallis tenella - Bog Pimpernel - 2-5, 7-9
Glaux maritima - Sea Milkwort - 6, 9
Lysimachia nemorum - Yellow Pimpernel, Wood Loosestrife - 4, 6, 8
Lysimachia punctata - Dotted Loosestrife 4, 6, 8
Lysimachia vulgaris - Yellow Loosestrife - Seen
Primula vulgaris - Primrose - 2, 4, 7, 8

RANUNCULACEAE

Anemone nemerosa - Wood Anemone 2
Aquilegia vulgaris - Columbine - 3
Caltha palustris - Marsh marigold - 4
Ranunculus acris - Meadow buttercup - 2-7, 9
Ranunculus bulbosus - Bulbous buttercup - 7-9
Ranunculus flammula - Lesser Spearwort - 3-7, 9
Ranunculus lingua - Greater Spearwort - 3
Ranunculus repens - Creeping Buttercup - 2, 3, 6, 9
Thalictrum minus - Lesser Meadow-rue - 2,3

RHAMNACEAE

Rhamnus alnus - Alder Buckthorn 2, 3,4

Rhamnus catharticus - Buckthorn - Seen once

ROSACEAE

Agrimonia eupatoria - Agrimony - 2-6

Alchemilla filicaulis - Southern Lady's Mantle - 3

Cotoneaster integrifolius - Rock Cotoneaster - 2

Cotoneaster microphyllus - Small-leaved Cotoneaster - 2, 3, 5

Crataegus monogyna - Hawthorn - 1-9

Filipendula ulmaria - Meadowsweet - 1-9

Fragaria vesca - Wild Strawberry - 5, 6, 9

Geum urbanum - Herb Bennet - 2, 3

Potentilla anglica - Trailing Tormentil - Seen

Potentilla anserina - Silverweed - 2-9

Potentilla erecta - Tormentil - 2-9

Potentilla reptans - Creeping Cinquefoil - 3, 6

Prunus laurocerasus - Cherry Laurel - 3-6, 8

Prunus spinosa - Blackthorn - 2-7

Rosa canina - Dog Rose - 5

Rosa pimpinellifolia - Burnet Rose - 3, 5

Rosa rugosa - Japanese Rose - 3-6

Rubus fruticosus - Bramble, Blackberry - 1-9

Sorbus aria - Whitebeam - 2-5

Sorbus aucuparia - Rowan 2, 6, 8

Sorbus hibernica - Irish Whitebeam - 2?

RUBIACEAE

Galium aparine - Cleavers - 2-6, 8, 9

Galium palustre - Marsh Bedstraw - 2, 4, 5, 7-9

Galium saxatile - Heath Bedstraw - Seen often

Galium verum - Lady's Bedstraw - 2-7, 9

Rubia peregrina - Wild Madder - Seen

SALICACEAE

Populus alba - White Poplar - 4

Populus nigra - Black Poplar - 4, 6

Populus tremula - Aspen - 2

Salix caprea - Goat Willow - 1-7, 9

Salix cinerea ssp *oleifolia* - Grey Willow - Seen

Salix pentandra - Bay Willow - 6

Salix repens var. *argentea* - 4, 5, 9

Salix repens - Creeping Willow - 4, 5, 9

SAXIFRAGACEAE

Chrysplenium oppositifolium - Golden Saxifrage - 3

Parnassia palustris - Grass of Parnassus - 2, 9

Saxifraga spathularis - St.Patrick's Cabbage - 6, 7

SCROPHULARIACEAE

Cymbalaria muralis - Ivy-leaved Toadflax - 3, 6

Digitalis purpurea - Foxglove - 4, 6-8

Euphrasia officinalis- Eyebright - 2-8

Euphrasia scotica - Eyebright - 9

Euphrasia teraquetra - Eyebright - 9

Pedicularis sylvatica - Lousewort - 3, 7

Rhinanthus minor - Yellow Rattle - 2, 3, 5, 9

Scrophularia nodosa - Common Figwort - 3-9

Verbascum thapsus - Great Mullein - 5, 7

Veronica anagallis-aquatica - Water Speedwell - 6

Veronica arvensis - Wall Speedwell - 6

Veronica beccabunga - Brooklime - 6

Veronica chamaedrys - Germander Speedwell - 4, 5

Veronica officinalis - Heath Speedwell - 5

Veronica serpyllifolia - Thyme-leaved Speedwell - 4

TILIACEAE

Tilia x europaea - Common Lime - 3, 5

URTICACEAE

Soleirolia soleirolii - Mind-your-own-business - 6, 7

Urtica dioica - Stinging Nettle - 1-7, 9

VALERIANACEAE

Centranthus ruber - Red Valerian - 2-6

Valeriana officinalis - Common Valerian - 2-4, 8, 9

VIOLACEAE

Viola palustris - Marsh Violet - Seen

Viola reichenbachiana - Wood dog Violet - Seen

Viola riviniana - Common Dog Violet - Seen

MONOCOTYLEDONS

IRIDACEAE

- Crocoshmia crocosmaeflora* - Montbretia - 6, 8, 9
- Crocoshmia paniculata* - Montbretia - 6
- Iris pseudacorus* - Yellow Iris - 2-5, 7-9

LILIACEAE

- Narthecium ossifragum* - Bog Asphodel - 4, 6, 8, 9

ORCHIDACEAE

- Anacamptis pyramidalis* - Pyramidal Orchid - 9
- Dactylorhiza ericitorum* - 3
- Dactylorhiza fuchsii* - Common Spotted Orchid - 2, 5, 9
- Dactylorhiza incarnata* - Early Marsh Orchid - 2, 3, 9
- Dactylorhiza maculata* - Heath Spotted Orchid - 2-9
- Dactylorhiza majalis* - Western Marsh Orchid - Seen
- Dactylorhiza okelleyi* - Okelly's Orchid - 2-4
- Epipactis palustris* - Marsh Helleborine - 2, 3, 9
- Gymnadenia conopsea* - Fragrant Orchid - 2, 3
- Listera ovata* - Twayblade - 2, 3, 5
- Neotia nidus-avis* - Birdsnest Orchid - 5
- Ophrys apifera* - Bee Orchid - 2
- Ophrys insectifera* - Fly Orchid - 2, 3

ALISMATACEAE

- Alisma plantago-aquatica* - Water-plantain - 4, 5
- Balldelia ranunculoides* - Lesser Water-plantain - 4, 5

ARACEAE

- Arum maculatum* - Cuckoo's Pint, Lords-and-ladies - 2, 3, 5

HIPPURIDACEAE

- Hippuris vulgaris* - Maretail - 3, 4

POTAMOGETONACEAE

- Potamogeton natans* - Broad-leaved Pondweed - 7

SPARGANIACEAE

- Sparganium emersum* - Unbranched Bur-weed - 4
- Sparganium erectum* - Branched Bur-weed - 4, 6

TYPHACEAE

- Typha latifolia* - Bulrush - 6-8

UTRICULARIACEAE

Utricularia sp - Bladderwort 2

CYPERACEAE

Carex aquatilis - Water sedge - 2-6
Carex caryophylllea - Spring Sedge - Seen
Carex elata - Tufted Sedge - Seen
Carex flacca - Glaucous Sedge - Seen
Carex nigra - Common Sedge - 2-4
Carex panicea - Carnation Sedge - seen
Carex paniculata - Great Tussock Sedge - Seen
Carex pendula - Pendulous Sedge - 2
Carex pilulifera - Pill Sedge - 2-3
Carex viridula - Yellow Sedge - 3-7
Carex sylvatica - Wood Sedge - 2
Eleocharis palustris - Common Spike-rush - 3-6

GRAMINEAE- POACEAE

Agrostis canina - Velvet Bent - 3-9
Agrostis stolonifera - Creeping Bent - 2-5, 7-9
Alopecurus geniculatus - Marsh Foxtail - 3-7
Alopecurus pratensis - Meadow Foxtail - 2, 3, 5, 7-9
Ammophila arenaria - Marram Grass - Seen
Briza media - Quaking Grass - 2-4, 8
Elytrigia repens - Common Couch - 2-6
Festuca arundinaceae - Tall Fescue - Seen
Festuca ovina - Sheep's Fescue - 3-5, 6-9
Festuca rubra - Red Fescue - 4-8
Festuca vivipara - Viviparous Fescue - Seen
Holcus lanatus - Yorkshire Fog - 3, 4
Holcus mollis - Creeping Soft-grass - 3-8
Lolium perenne - Perennial Rye-grass - 3-5, 7-9
Melica uniflorus - Wood Melickc - 2,
Millium effusum - Wood Millet - 2
Molina caerulea - Purple Moor-grass - 4, 6, 8, 9
Phleum pratense - Timothy - Seen
Phragmites australis - Common Reed - 2-9
Poa annua - Annual Meadow-grass - 3-9
Poa nemoralis - Wood Meadow-grass - 2
Poa pratensis - Smooth Meadow-grass - 3-5, 7-9

JUNCACEAE

Eriophorum angustifolium - Common Cotton-grass - 3, 4, 6-9
Juncus articulatus - Jointed Rush - 2-4, 6-9
Juncus bufonius - Toad Rush - 3-4, 6-9
Juncus conglomeratus - Compact Rush - 4-6, 9
Juncus effusus - Soft Rush - 3-6

Juncus inflexus - Hard Rush - Seen
Lucula sylvatica - Great Wood-rush -2
Luzula campestris - Field wood-rush - 3, 5, 8, 9
Schoenoplectus lacustris - Common Club-rush - 2-5, 7
Schoenus nigricans - Black Bog-rush - 2, 7

FERNS

Asplenium ruta-muraria - Wall-rue - 2, 3, 5, 6
Asplenium trichomanes - Maidenhair Spleenwort - 2-6, 8
Athyrium (Dryopteris) felix-femina - Lady Fern - 3, 4
Blechnum spicant - Hard Fern - 4, 6-8
Ceterach officinarum - Rusty-back - 3, 5, 9
Dryopteris felix-mas - Male Fern - 2, 4, 5
Osmunda regalis - Royal Fern - 4, 7
Phyllitis scolopendrium - Hartstongue - 2, 4, 6, 7
Polypodium interjectum - Western Polypody -
Polypodium vulgare - Common Polypody - Seen
Polystichum aculeatum - Hard Shieldfern - Seen
Pteridium aquilinum - Bracken - 1-8

EQUISETACEAE

Equisetum arvense - Field Horsetail - 3, 4
Equisetum fluviale - Water Horsetail - 3, 4
Equisetum palustre - Marsh Horsetail - 3
Equisetum sylvaticum - Wood Horsetail - 3
Equisetum telmateia - Great Horsetail - Seen

Systematic List Number 2 Birds

Many thanks to David Miller for compiling the following list.

Little Grebe	One seen on Carra lough
Grey Heron	Three sightings
Cormorant	The occasional bird on loughs
Gadwall	Small family groups on Carra Lough and one morning Cong River below Ryan Hotel
Mallard	A few only on various stretches of water
Tufted Duck	A couple on various Loughs
Sparrow hawk	One fleeting glimpse
Pheasant	Heard a couple of times and seen on the roadside
Coot	Most numerous bird on the Loughs
Oystercatcher	Group on a beach
Lapwing	occasional small flock on roadside fields and isolated birds on heathland.
Ringed Plover	One at Keel
Redshank	One on a beach and one on a Lough side
Dunlin	A few on beach
Curlew	A couple at Blacksod Pt, Belmullet
Whimbrel	Five on Achill Island
Yellow-legged Gull	A few and widespread over loughs and coast
Black-headed gull	The occasional bird
Lesser Black-backed gull	By far the most numerous bird on beaches
Greater Black-backed gull	Sometimes an isolated bird among flocks of lessers
:Comic' Tern	One or two feeding on coastal inlets
Sandwich tern	A couple feeding young at Blacksod Pt, Belmullet
Puffin	One seen flying at Blacksod Pt Belmullet
Guillemot	One flying at Blacksod Pt Belmullet
Woodpigeon	Widespread
Collared Dove	Limited number - always near habitation
Swift	Always some in the evenings above towns
Skylark	One or two above heathland
Swallow	Widespread but limited in numbers
House martin	Widespread - slightly more numerous than swallows but still low in numbers
Grey wagtail	A couple on Cong River
Pied wagtail	Common at Cong
Dipper	One at Cong
Wren	A couple seen
Robin	Two or three only noted
Redstart	A couple of sightings
Whinchat	Single sighting
Stonechat	One or two noted on heathland
Northern Wheatear	Fairly numerous on heathland
Blackbird	Widespread but not common
Mistle Thrush	Two sightings
Blue Tit	Widespread but not common
Great tit	heard
Magpie	Widespread but not common
Jackdaw	Common at Cong, limited numbers elsewhere
Rook	Only a few and widespread
Hooded crow	Widespread as isolated birds

Raven	One seen and heard
Starling	Very common in flocks of 20-30
House Sparrow	Widespread
Chaffinch	Widespread but in very limited numbers
Twite	One noted