



*"Recording
the Biodiversity
and Habitats of
Lough Allen"*

This is a new standardised PDF system for recording water and other environment quality issues encountered during the course of Biodiversity survey work on or around Lough Allen. It will reduce and manage the amount of such material appearing in our Log. You will probably have arrived here from a Link in some recent Log, Use Browser BACK button to go back.

Lough Allen has a rich variety of Plants, Animals, and beautiful Places. To safeguard these we urgently need to stop some signs of creeping Pollution!

NOTE: This Environment Quality report has the same reference number (plus 'EQ') as its Log item.

[HOME](#) / [LABlog2014b](#) / [LOG 2013](#) / [WaterLOG 12-13](#)

Ref. No: LL14b/34/EQ

Large Static Foam area in still water of Inishfail.

08-09-2014

(Env. Qual. reports have the same number as **LabLog2014** reports but with an EQ appended.)

DetailsCopiedfromEnvLog2014: Wind northerly force 1-2 (c. 1.5kts on occasion). Temp: 4 - 10°C. Weather: Cool, clear, mostly grey with short patches of sunshine. Water: Calm in mid lake and north of Inishfail at first. Slight ripples elsewhere and everywhere later. Temp: 16.5°C Level: 2.4m. **Problem:** A confusion between pleasing conditions and some detectable contamination problems.

Observations: Initially this day promised fair with only very slight persistent bubbling behind our boat as we left Cormongan. So slight and so ephemeral as to be almost classified as normal in a lake changing from oligotrophic to mesotrophic? However, within a short while clearly visible widespread contamination became obvious. This is the scene that met us as we approached Inishfail heading south.



There was a large becalmed area of dense floating foam. As you can see the area in question is flat calm with only a trace of a northerly breeze elsewhere on the lake at this time. Agitation of surface water was producing persistent foam; agitation of sub-surface water (e.g. by the propeller) was not! We suspect that this is an artificial surfactant material emanating from further up the lake, travelling down the Shannon channel and surfacing off the Cormongan Islands and then being concentrated by whatever breeze there was in the shallow area at the tip of Cormongan. This was most unsightly — its impact on wildlife may be minimal at this stage; its effect on tourism, in an otherwise pristine lake, questionable.



LEFT: This is a **Standard Boat Test** conducted as we approached the area shown above. Going by the large leaden bubbles at the sides of the wake, we would classify this as 'severe' contamination. Persistent bubbles have been a frequent feature in many parts of the lake this Summer (when the conditions have been calm enough) but are rarely this large or this persistent.

BELOW: This is a view from close to Inishfail looking across the channel to Slieve an Iarann. It shows the widespread nature of the scum and also where it clears as water flows into the channel and towards the sluices. (This image may be enlarged.)

A small dense CyanoBloom was also detected at Drumshanbo Lock later this morning. Foam such as shown above can lead to the formation of such toxic blooms. It happened last November!

Conclusion & Comment: It seems as if water quality may be improving in Lough Allen but there are still concerns. Dense white onshore foam banks are rare now, no Blue Green blooms have been seen in mid lake, but blooms have occurred locally and persistent bubbling behind boat wake (indicating reduced surface tension in the water) is widespread but variable, localised and hard to map. In certain situations Lough Allen can still produce **unsatisfactory water quality!**

