

HERITAGE OUTLOOK

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SUMMER 2004



MANAGING OUR OCEANS
How do we prevent over-exploitation?

THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY
thinking globally, acting locally

ARCHAEOLOGY IN CONTEMPORARY IRELAND
Challenges and opportunities

COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS • OUR HISTORIC HOMES • PILGRIM PATHS • HERITAGE EVENTS



*The Heritage Council works to protect and enhance the richness,
quality and diversity of our national heritage for everyone.*

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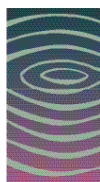
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CHOMHAIRLE
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HERITAGE
COUNCIL

Established under the Heritage Act of 1995

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HERITAGE OUTLOOK

C O M M E N T

What is heritage? When most people hear the word 'heritage', they think 'history'. When asked the question: 'What is Heritage?', many would immediately think of man-made dwellings, including castles, manors, and thatched cottages. Local heritage is often viewed in terms of tangibles such as old buildings or monuments, suggesting man's influence on our surroundings, man's building prowess and craftsmanship. National heritage is seen as something more abstract, encompassing what we share as a nation - our folklore, language and so on.

This common understanding of the term 'heritage' as equal to 'history' provides a great challenge to the Heritage Council. The perception that heritage is historical and man-made is dangerously confining, as if conserving churches and castles will suffice to safeguard our heritage. It won't. You will see from the articles in this magazine that the Council's brief is more varied than this. You will also see how our natural environment is a fundamental aspect - *the* fundamental aspect - of our heritage. It is our living heritage. Protecting our environment, in the face of urban development, increased commercialisation of farming practices and other threats, is a lynchpin in safeguarding our heritage. Heritage is about conserving in order to pass on to future generations. What legacy will be valued more than our birds, our wildlife, our trees, our countryside?

Under the National Heritage Act (1995), 'heritage' is defined as including the following: monuments; archaeological objects; heritage objects; architectural heritage; flora and fauna; wildlife habitats; landscapes; seascapes and wrecks; geology; heritage gardens and parks; and inland waterways. This broader view of heritage, aside from taking the term out of the historical context, means we are suddenly all involved. We see preserving ancient chalices and monuments as someone else's job, typically that of Government, but mention the environment and we know we're all responsible. I hope this magazine is a step towards redressing a distorted perception of heritage. Heritage isn't just to be found in museums. It's amongst the people, in the silence of the fields and noise of the city streets.

Michael Starrett Chief Executive
AN CHOMHAIRLE OIDHREACHTA

Heritage News



The ESB Cooling Towers now demolished at Rhode. Courtesy of the Electricity Supply Board.

RHODE COOLING TOWERS DEMOLISHED

With the demolition of the two cooling towers at Rhode, Co Offaly, on March 16th, the only remaining tower in the Irish landscape is at Bellacorrick. Seven cooling towers were originally built by the ESB, but they have gradually been demolished over the past few years.

When first built in the 1950s, the towers caused an outcry, and were described as a blight on the landscape, only tolerated by the local communities on condition that they would be demolished at the end of their designed life span, which was to be 25 years. How times have changed! Over the years, the same structures became symbolic of the electrification of Ireland, and their presence on the flat landscape of the midlands began to be looked on with great affection. The Heritage Council became involved with the ESB at the time of the demolition of the cooling tower at Portarlinton, when there was considerable public outrage at the loss of this part of our industrial heritage. The loss of more towers was anticipated, and the Heritage Council asked the ESB to look at the possibility of keeping at least one tower in the landscape.

Studies commissioned by the ESB described the three remaining towers, at Rhode and Bellacorrick, as having come to the end of their useful life. Concrete design in the 1950s was less advanced, and in some parts the steel reinforcement had less than 50% of the required concrete cover. With no further use for them, the cost of maintaining the towers was causing considerable anxiety to the ESB. Nevertheless, the Heritage Council asked the ESB to commission a further independent study to see if at least one cooling tower could be kept as a monument in the landscape. The ESB agreed to this, and Bierrums of Bedfordshire UK carried

out the assessment of the remaining cooling towers. The main findings of this study concurred with the ESB's earlier findings and concluded that if one tower was to be retained, the cost of repair would be several million euro and funding would be required for long-term maintenance. The cost of insurance would also be prohibitive.

It had to be reluctantly accepted that resources were not available to invest such large sums into one monument, and that the towers would have to come down. ESB have agreed to consider commissioning a suitable model of cooling towers to record their special impact and their operational details.

- Mary Hanna, Architectural Officer, the Heritage Council

HERITAGE STUDIES IN LETTERFRACK

Instead of bringing students to lecture halls, Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology is bringing lectures out to students. The first to benefit from this new learning initiative will be heritage enthusiasts near Letterfrack, about 50 miles from Galway city.



Preparing for the new foundation course in heritage studies, in Letterfrack, are, from left, Paul Gosling, GMIT lecturer, Mary MacCague, Head of Department in the School of Humanities, GMIT, and Marie Mannion, Heritage Officer in Galway County Council.

In March, GMIT, in conjunction with The Heritage Council and Galway County Council, began heritage studies evening classes in the

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Furniture College, Letterfrack. The eight-week course will act as a stepping stone for students hoping to earn new third-level qualifications. Galway's Heritage Officer, Marie Mannion has worked with Mary MacCague, Head of Department in the School of Humanities in GMT, in setting up the eight-week foundation course. GMT lecturers Paul Gosling, Carol Gleeson, Dr Cillian Roden, and Deirdre

O'Neill have also signed up to host the cultural landscape and natural history aspects of the course. "People wanted to know more about their local heritage," explained Paul Gosling, who specialises in architecture and archaeology. To learn more about the foundation course in Heritage Studies, contact the School of Humanities in GMT.



WORLD BIODIVERSITY DAY

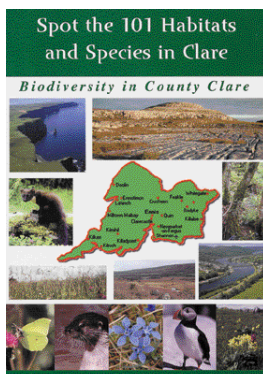
Saturday May 22nd was World Biodiversity Day and Sophie McCann, Joshua Adido, and Abbie Soon came out to launch a series of local biodiversity events across the country, which were coordinated by The Heritage Council in association with local authorities. Events included guided walks, tree planting, and a coastal wildlife day.

BIODIVERSITY IN CO CLARE

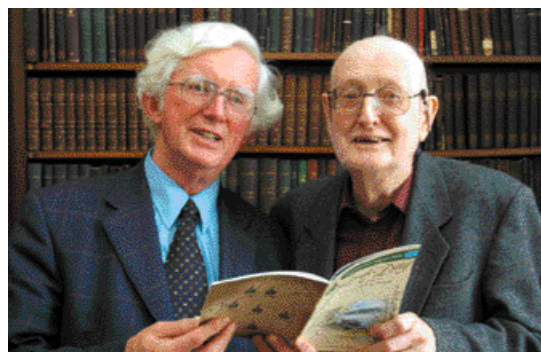
This recently-published booklet, introducing the biodiversity of County Clare, provides an explanation of biodiversity, its importance, and what it means in the county. One of the main aims of a Local Biodiversity Action Plan is to raise public awareness and involvement in the conservation of biodiversity. Spot the 101

Habitats and Species in Clare describes 101 habitats and species that occur in the county, including both rare and familiar species.

Copies are available from Elaine Keegan, Biodiversity Action Plan Project Manager, email: ekeegan@clarecoco.ie, Tel. 065-6846456.



Museum Standards and Accreditation Pilot study participants: Martina Malone, Heritage Council; Michael Corcoran, National Transport Museum; Michael Starrett, Heritage Council; Liam Kelly, National Transport Museum; and Eithne Verling, Heritage Council



Authors of the mapguides series Peter Harbison and Joss Lynam attended the launch of the Pilgrim Paths Guides in the Royal Irish Academy, Dawson Street recently.

Heritage News

LAUNCH OF PILGRIM PATH GUIDES



Noel Ahern TD, Minister for State at the Dept of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs; Nessa Dunlea, Heritage Council; Bridget Loughlin, Heritage Officer Kildare Co Council; and Dominic Berridge, Heritage Officer Waterford Co Council attended the launch of the Pilgrim Paths guides in the Royal Irish Academy, Dawson Street recently. Minister Noel Ahern officially launched the guides.

Representatives of the pilgrim routes committees, with the Heritage Council Project Steering Group. L to R: Fr Tomás O Caoimh; Isabel Bennett, Cosán na Naomh; Joss Lynam; Michael Begg, St Kevin's Way; Dagmar O Riain Raedel; Deborah Maxwell, Lough Derg; Noel Ahern TD, Minister for State at the Dept of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs; Willie Mullen, St Kevin's Way; Stephen Ryan, St Kevin's Way; Peter Harbison; and Ruth Delany.



CONNEMARA IN STONE - Heritage Education through Digital Perspectives of the Natural Landscape

The natural landscape of Connemara provides a remarkable resource for geological heritage education and an opportunity to heighten awareness and respect for our environment. Landscape studies can highlight links between local bedrock and its use in the building and redevelopment of our cities and towns. Connemara is noted worldwide for its natural beauty and its unique geological heritage. As part of the first Galway County Heritage Plan 2004-2008, a project funded by the Heritage Council and Galway County Council intends to generate a digital mosaic broadly entitled 'Connemara: the story behind the scenery'. This project incorporates the production of a series of user-friendly perspectives of Galway's geology and the provision of a facility to read the landscape using three-dimensional perspectives of topography married with bedrock and glacial deposits.

Our understanding of landscape development can now be enhanced by using satellite imagery combined with digital geology maps and digital elevation data. This approach allows for the development of computerised images which enable the geologist to interrogate the topography in terms of geological controls such as major faults, glacial features and major junctions between contrasting rock types. The result will be a series of computer-generated three-dimensional perspectives of key landscape areas in Connemara, with the geology draped over the topography - these will be made available for viewing at key locations throughout

the county. It is also intended to support these computerised images and movies with an accessible text aimed at primary and secondary education and the tourism industry. The study will initially focus on the Twelve Bens region of Connemara, an area noted for its rugged topography and exposed geology, which attracts geology students from all over the world. Connemara marble quarries, kilometric and metric folds in the Bens quartzites and Connemara marbles in the scenic Inagh and Glencoaghan Valleys are some of the elements awaiting the digital treatment in this study. The project will create high quality interactive educational packages to heighten our understanding of the natural and cultural heritage aspects of the landscape.

The project is directed by Dr Martin Feely, Department of Earth and Ocean Sciences and will involve close collaboration with Marie Mannion, Heritage Officer with Galway County Council, and Stephen Kelly at the Geographical Information Systems unit in the Environmental Change Institute at NUIG.



The image shows beautiful 470 million-year-old folds frozen in time in Connemara marble layers. Folds like this, but of kilometre-scale, are present in the Twelve Bens, the target area for the project.

Managing Our Oceans

Fisheries scientist **John Molloy** explains the challenges of harvesting our marine resources without over-exploiting fish stocks



Until fairly recently, it was a commonly held fallacy that fish stocks throughout the world were inexhaustible and that mankind would never be able to decrease them to the extent that they might never recover. Indeed it was thought that the only factor that might cause this would be some catastrophic environmental condition that would affect the ability of a stock to reproduce, and as a result it would become depleted. However, as everyone knows, we live in an era of rapid and bewildering change and many of the world's fish stocks are now known to be in what fishery scientists call a 'depleted state'. Not only does this description apply to stocks throughout the world, but it also applies to many of the stocks that are exploited by Irish fishermen. At present, many of the important Irish fisheries that traditionally sustained countless generations around our shores are in a very poor state. Most people have heard of the Irish Sea Cod Recovery Plan or the closure of the Irish herring fisheries, drastic measures that were enforced not just to conserve these stocks, but to prevent them from sinking to such a low state that they might never recover. Indeed,

most of the stocks exploited by the Irish fishing fleet were estimated by the Marine Institute in 2003 to be seriously over-exploited and a small number were depleted. It seems that there are very few stocks around Ireland that might be developed further. Even the newly discovered 'deep water species', such as orange roughy, grenadier and deep water sharks that frequent the waters off the west of Ireland and were first exploited within the last five years, are no longer safe, and this year the scientific advice for many of these is for severe reductions in catches.

many of the important Irish fisheries that traditionally sustained countless generations around our shores are in a very poor state

How did we get here?

So the obvious question that must be asked is how did we allow traditional stocks to be so overfished. The answer, like many other things in science, is a combination of a number of factors. The technology of fishing has developed

at a phenomenal rate, and this has meant that the efficiency of fleets and their ability to catch fish has increased. There have been major developments in electronic and acoustic techniques, resulting in new methods of detecting and catching fish shoals in areas that were previously considered as 'safe havens', for example, deep water, rough ground, or wrecks. The type of nets now used by the fleets are such that they can catch enormous quantities of fish without bursting, and boats can fish in deep water and on rocky grounds that were previously considered as 'unfishable'. The fishing vessels are now capable of staying at sea for long periods without having to come ashore, often in bad weather, and they can travel to areas that were once far beyond the reach of the Irish fleet. For example, Irish vessels now regularly fish from Norway to the west coast of Africa, and as far west in the Atlantic as the Porcupine and Rockall Banks - which may be over 300 miles from our major ports. In many cases, skippers are forced to work in these circumstances because dwindling stocks and restricted catches have forced vessel owners to fish further from home and in areas where they would not necessarily be if stocks were healthy in inshore waters. The increasing demand for fish and the ability of the fleets to meet and outstrip that demand has thus lead to over-exploitation of stocks. The situation has been aggravated by deteriorating water quality in many of the important fishing grounds creating conditions in which fish can no longer survive or reproduce.

Conservation Measures

Despite the belief that fish stocks throughout the world were inexhaustible, the older generations in Ireland seemed to recognize the

necessity for some sort of conservation measures. Numerous by-laws were introduced in the middle of the 19th century to prevent fishing in many bays, estuaries, and inlets. Many of these laws, which are still on the statute books, were based on expert local knowledge and were introduced to prevent fishing in what were considered 'nursery' areas for juvenile fish. It would be very worthwhile to review the origins of these by-laws because many of them seem to be largely ignored or are long forgotten. It was clearly recognized that fishing juvenile populations could only lead to stock depletion. There were also restrictions on different types of fishing. For instance, the introduction of trawling in Ireland over 100 years ago was only allowed after much controversy and considerable violence between different fishing communities along the coasts. These restrictions were followed by further limits on the mesh sizes permitted in nets and also on the minimum size of the fish that could be landed.

As the European fisheries rapidly expanded during the 1960s and 1970s, it became obvious that these national measures were no longer sufficient to halt declining stocks, and restrictions on the size of the Total Annual Catch (TAC) taken from any species were introduced. Thus, the era of TACs and Quota was introduced in the 1970s, and the Irish quota were first set by the North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC). These TACs and quota then became the responsibility of the EU in the early 1980s.

It is now apparent that, despite TACs, closed areas, minimum fish sizes and mesh regulations, the decline in fish stocks has continued and the present management systems have been anything but successful. In a pretty desperate attempt to decrease the fishing effort,



Traditional mackerel curing at Valentia Island. Photograph courtesy of the National Library, Lawrence Imperial 3063.

Traditional mackerel boats restored at Crinniú na mbád, Kinvarra



the EU have recently introduced a scheme whereby vessels are removed from the national fleets and those remaining may only spend a certain number of fishing days at sea each year. These drastic measures have had a serious effect on the traditional Irish fleet and many of our once busy fishing ports, such as Dingle, Burtonport, Greencastle and Howth, are now sadly bereft of fishing vessels. All of this has happened in a very short time, and the Irish fishing industry is now reeling from the effects of these conservation and management measures.

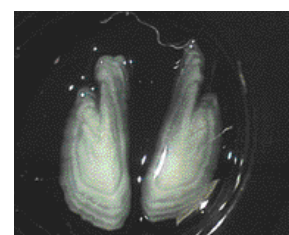
quota systems have led to large scale underreporting of catches

Scientific Advice

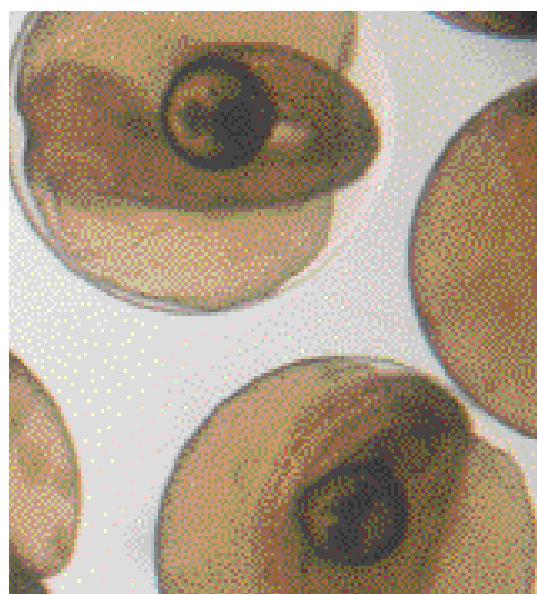
Stock conservation measures are based on advice given by scientists, and in Europe the scientific advice on fisheries is coordinated by the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES). ICES was first established in 1900 and has its head quarters in Copenhagen. It gives advice to the various fishery management organisations, such as the EU and the other fishery commissions. ICES coordinates the scientific investigations that are used to assess the state of fish stocks and makes recommendations each year on what the annual catches should be, and also advises on any other technical regulations that might be required. Ireland contributes much to these investigations and the Irish Marine Institute runs a number of very important scientific programmes on stocks that are exploited by the Irish fleets.

In general, the assessment of stocks is based on comprehensive biological sampling programmes on the catches, backed up by different types of surveys which are usually carried out by research ships. The biological sampling

programmes monitor the state of the stock by examining changes that take place in the age structure of populations and the growth, mortality and maturity rates, all of which may change in relation to fishing intensity. Age in fish is determined by counting the winter rings that are laid down each year on the 'otoliths' or ear stones. The research surveys include egg sur-



Scientists determine a fish's age by counting the winter rings laid down each year on the otoliths or ear stones. Pictured here is the ear stone of a four-year-old mackerel.



Mackerel eggs. Fish egg surveys help fisheries scientists to learn more about the spawning behaviour of the species.

veys to study spawning behaviour, young fish surveys to determine the abundance of young fish which is necessary to give advice on future stock sizes, acoustic surveys to determine the size of adult populations, and tagging experiments to study migrations. All of these surveys

give an indication of how a stock is reacting to different fishing intensities. Of course the fishing intensity is itself determined by the total catch and estimating total catches has proved extremely difficult. In addition to the problems caused by the quota systems which have led to large scale underreporting of catches, there is also the problem of fish species that are caught but are discarded because they are not suitable for human consumption. These fish are dead when they are thrown back into the sea and the quantities are sometimes significant. Besides creating problems for the assessment scientist who needs to know the amount of fish removed each year from the population, it also deprives many species of important food sources. It is generally acknowledged that in many cases there is considerable uncertainty attached to stock estimates, and this in turn has led to friction between scientists, managers, and fishermen.

There have been major developments in electronic and acoustic techniques, resulting in new methods of catching fish shoals in areas that were previously considered as 'safe havens'

Can we do better in future?

The present unsatisfactory situation, where, despite management measures, stocks in many cases are still declining, has stimulated a whole new thrust in the scientific approach to how stocks should be assessed and managed. Fishery scientists are now looking towards a holistic approach to managing marine resources and instead of trying to assess and manage each species separately, as happened in the past, they are looking at the whole ocean and treating it as a single unit that contains many integrated parts, all of which are interdependent. Therefore, ICES has now set up a new Advisory Committee on Ecosystems (ACE), which will try to advise on multi-species management and will include a whole new emphasis on the state of the environment. Much more attention will now be paid to aspects such as the quality of the waters, the spawning habitats, the escapement and protection of young fish, and the relationship between fish stocks, marine mammals and seabirds.

In addition to the new scientific approach, management authorities have at last realised the importance that must be attached to involving fishermen in the assessment and management process. The 'stakeholders' are now becoming increasingly involved in the assessment and management of stocks. In Ireland, two new management committees have been





Traditional mackerel curing at Valentia Island. Photograph courtesy of the National Library, Lawrence Imperial 3063.

established to deal with the pelagic stocks (herring, mackerel, horse mackerel). These committees, one based in Killybegs and the other in Castletownbere, are very serious about their role in assessment and management. They have defined mission statements and management targets and have undertaken a number of successful research projects. They have also introduced their own conservation measures in their areas. This is the type of management envisaged by the EU and it is hoped that Regional Advisory Committees (RACs) will be set up in the immediate future. These RACs will, as their name implies, manage fisheries on a regional basis and will comprise fishermen, scientists and local authorities, and will certainly provide a much better 'hands on' approach to management.

Although fishery assessment and management is a very difficult task, this new approach will hopefully provide better results than the now outdated system, which relied heavily on TACs and which largely ignored the people most active in the whole procedure, namely the fishermen. Fishery science can at times be both frustrating and depressing because it is expensive and involves long term research, and it is often difficult to determine if in fact a system

can be created whereby the oceans can be harvested in a sensible manner, particularly when it is constantly under threat from so many sources. However, there are a number of well-documented success stories, such as the recovery of the North Sea and Atlanto-Scandian herring fisheries. These successes were the result of really severe management restrictions that were rigorously enforced by management authorities and were supported by the fishing communities. Hopefully the new approach now being developed will lead to a revival of the fishing industry and a successful future for Irish fishing communities.

*John Molloy retired in 2003, having spent a lifetime working with the Department of the Marine and the Marine Institute. During that time he was involved in the assessment of fish stocks around Ireland and in the provision of management advice. He also served on many international committees on fish stock assessments and on EU committees on fisheries management. He spent many years at sea carrying out fish surveys around Ireland on commercial and research vessels. For details on John's recently published book *The Irish Mackerel Fishery and the making of an Industry*, please see book reviews.*

think globally, act locally

The Convention on Biological Diversity



In 1992, world leaders met at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, attending what has become known as the 'Earth Summit'. At this meeting, a number of agreements were signed, including two binding agreements, the Convention on Climate Change, and the Convention on Biological Diversity, the latter being the first global agreement on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity. At the conference, over 150 governments signed the biodiversity treaty, and today 188 countries have ratified the agreement. Ireland signed the Convention on Biological Diversity in 1992 and ratified it in 1996. The Convention is legally binding - countries that ratify it are obliged to implement its provisions.

The Convention on Biological Diversity is one of those sexy policy instruments that has received a considerable amount of media attention, and

some of its messages have percolated down to the local level. But while the term 'biodiversity' has been bandied about in many contexts, its meaning is not often fully understood.

WHAT IS BIODIVERSITY?

Biodiversity, or biological diversity to give it its full title, is the term given to the variety of life on earth and the natural patterns it forms. It's an all-encompassing term to describe the rich genetic variety that makes each individual life form unique; the variety of different organisms that occur throughout the world (1.75 million species have already been identified, but scientists believe there may be in excess of 13 million); and the rich variety of ecosystems or landscapes that occur across the globe. And, of course, add the influence of human activity to this cauldron of life, and the result is a stunningly diverse environment that makes the earth such a uniquely habitable place for humans.



Irish stocks of the white-clawed crayfish, *Austro potamo bius pallipes*, are considered the strongest in Europe. While 500 species of crayfish are found in North America, there are only three species native to western Europe. French, British and Spanish stocks of *A. pallipes* have been decimated due to the introduction of aliens, including the plague-carrying American crayfish. Ireland is now the only European country that does not have American crayfish.
© Photograph by Eddie Dunne

WHY IS BIODIVERSITY IMPORTANT?

If it weren't for biological diversity, much of what we take for granted around us would not function; therefore, we speak of biodiversity as providing humans with a range of 'goods and services' that sustain our lives. Some of the goods and services that are apparent include the:

- provision of food, fuel, and fibre, e.g. fish, live-stock, and crop varieties
- provision of shelter and building materials, e.g. timber for construction
- provision of medicines
- purification of air and water
- detoxification and decomposition of wastes
- stabilisation and moderation of the Earth's climate
- moderation of floods, droughts, temperature extremes and the forces of wind
- generation and renewal of soil fertility, including nutrient cycling
- pollination of plants, including many crops
- control of pests and diseases
- maintenance of genetic resources as key inputs to crop varieties and livestock breeds, medicines, and other products
- cultural and aesthetic benefits
- ability to adapt to change

But describing the benefits that biodiversity provides in a clinical way, as 'commodities', does little to encapsulate just how central a role biodiversity plays in our everyday lives. The aspects of life that many of us depend upon for our physical and spiritual well-being draw heavily from the experience of interacting with biodiversity. It is no coincidence that walking along the bank of a river, strolling down a country lane, climbing a mountain, hearing birdsong or smelling the fragrances of summer is more uplifting than say, sitting on concrete or strolling through an industrial heartland, while listening to cars and cranes. In recognizing this, we haven't even begun to understand

the importance of things that we take totally for granted, such as the ease with which we can grow fresh food, due to the enormously complex natural systems that maximise the utility of sunlight, air, soil, and water. Anything that serves to further erode this rich tapestry of life, or that disrupts the functioning of natural ecological processes, threatens to erode the very fabric of life on which we depend and is of direct relevance to our welfare.

*our physical and spiritual well-being
draw heavily from the experience of
interacting with biodiversity*

SETTING THE GLOBAL AGENDA

The Convention on Biological Diversity is a landmark agreement, as it recognizes in international law, for the first time, that the conservation of biological diversity is "a common concern of humankind" and is an integral part of the development process. Having been ratified by 188 countries, it is also the largest international agreement, effectively setting a global agenda. The Convention is comprehensive in its goals, dealing as it does with the conservation of biodiversity, the sustainable use of the components of biodiversity, and the sharing of benefits arising from the commercial and other utilisation of genetic resources in a fair and equitable way.

In the Irish context, and of direct relevance to the role of the Heritage Council, three aspects of the Convention are particularly relevant. The Convention highlights the need to address biodiversity issues in the wider countryside, outside the designated areas and protected sites. It also recognizes that all sectors of society impact upon, and therefore have a significant role to play in, the conservation of biological diversity; expecting the conservation of biological diversity to be achieved through the traditional, protected areas approach administered by a single organisation is no longer adequate. Perhaps of most importance is the clear

recognition that there has to be far greater involvement by stakeholders in the decision making process.

THE NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY PLAN

These internationally agreed priorities have been translated into an Irish context through the publication of the National Biodiversity Plan by the Government in 2002. The National Plan sets out a comprehensive range of actions, which, if implemented, would make a significant contribution to ensuring that the conservation of biological diversity takes a more prominent role in public policy. However, the absence of any targets or any dedicated financial package to facilitate implementation of the plan is disappointing. Nevertheless, for the first time, Ireland now has a plan for the conservation of biological diversity, and the onus is on all of us involved in conservation to work towards its implementation.

LOCAL BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLANS

To this end, the Heritage Council has identified Action 10 of the National Biodiversity Plan as being of particular importance to its work. It states: "Each Local Authority (is) to prepare a Local Biodiversity Plan in consultation with relevant stakeholders". This action is a very significant policy development as it recognizes, for the first time, the key role that local authorities have to play in addressing and coordinating biodiversity issues at the local level. It also recognizes that the biodiversity process needs to be additional to the traditional statutory protection and designated area approach, which is the responsibility of National Parks and Wildlife. The government

should be applauded for this new policy direction.

As the Heritage Council has already put a considerable effort into building partnerships with local authorities for dealing with heritage issues at the local level by the appointment of Heritage Officers, it is only logical that this structure would be built upon for development of Local Biodiversity Action Plans. The Heritage Council is working closely with the Heritage Officers to provide guidance, support and encouragement in order to enable local authorities to commence this process, a process that has been set out in *Guidelines for the Production of Local Biodiversity Action Plans*, produced by the Heritage Council in March, 2003.

PROMOTING DIALOGUE AND UNDERSTANDING

The Heritage Council understands that if the conservation of biological diversity is to be successful at the local level, the development of a local process of dialogue and interaction is far more important than the sole production of yet another inert plan. For this reason, the Heritage Council seeks a commitment from the local authority to establish a working group or steering committee to oversee the development of the Local Biodiversity Action Plan. And while this group would embark upon, and have the objective of producing a Local Biodiversity Action Plan, much of their work, initially at least, would be on becoming familiar with the concepts underpinning biodiversity, identifying the rich biodiversity resources of the area, and understanding how the actions of the different sectors influence this resource. It is only when this groundwork has been completed can it reasonably be expected for the different groups to fully buy into the process, take responsibility for their own actions, and make



Marsh Fritillary, *Euphydryas aurinia*. Once widespread in Ireland and Britain, the marsh fritillary suffered a severe decline in the 20th century. It is considered to be one of the most endangered species in Europe, making the Irish population internationally important.
© Robert Thompson



The Irish Draught Horse, a rare breed. 'Enniskeane Flash', Winner of the Irish Draught Mare Championship at the Dublin Horse Show in 2001. Photograph courtesy of Billy Cotter

a real commitment to enshrining the objectives to conserve biological diversity within their own sphere of influence. This process will take time, but time invested in this important process can pay rich dividends.

Cynics will claim that this process lacks gravitas, has no concrete powers, and deflects attention from the real business of enforcing our nature conservation and planning laws. After all, our protected areas - Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and Natural Heritage Areas - are the jewels in the crown of Ireland's natural heritage. There is no denying that the need to ensure the favourable conservation status of protected areas must remain a priority for nature conservation in Ireland. However, if anything has become apparent in recent years it is that this is a very difficult process and does little to win over friends to the side of conservation. Clearly what is needed is a parallel process whereby the support of people, be they farmers, local community groups, private sector workers or public servants, is sought to achieve positive results. The beauty of the Local Biodiversity Action Plan process is that you can deflect attention from telling people 'what they must not do' towards tapping into people's goodwill and interests and translating this interest and contribution into something positive and constructive.

I very much hope that in dealing with biodiversity issues we demonstrate that we are a rich, mature and confident society that can stand up to the serious threat posed to Ireland's biodiversity by the rampant individualism that appears to have gripped the country in recent years

THE FUTURE CHALLENGE

Six local authorities have already given a commitment to commence the Local Biodiversity Action Plan process, and in three, the process is well underway. Where the process has commenced, people have been surprised at the amount of goodwill that exists out there towards nature con-

servation. The task facing us now is to convince the other local authorities that the need to conserve biological diversity is a worthwhile and important activity; and that while superficially it may appear very low down on their list of priorities - compared with catering for local housing needs, the provision of sanitary and other services and the maintenance of local infrastructure - how issues that could be considered incidental to core activities are dealt with says much about the richness and health of the society in which we live. I very much hope that in dealing with biodiversity issues we demonstrate that we are a rich, mature and confident society that can stand up to the serious threat posed to Ireland's biodiversity by the rampant individualism that appears to have gripped the country in recent years.

THE MAIN ELEMENTS OF A LOCAL BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN, AS PROPOSED BY THE HERITAGE COUNCIL

There are several distinct elements in the Local Biodiversity Action Plan process, and some of these follow a logical sequence of steps. However, work on the different elements need not commence sequentially, but can commence as opportunities arise. The production of the Local Biodiversity Action Plan would place all the initiatives in context and present an agreed plan for local action.

The main elements of the process are as follows:

- Establish a Biodiversity Working Group
- Promote and raise awareness of the conservation of biological diversity
- Consult with individuals and organisations
- Establish a database
- Audit the local biodiversity resource
- Identify information gaps
- Establish priorities and set targets
- Identify delivery mechanisms and financial sources
- Produce draft Local Biodiversity Action Plan
- Agree and publish the Local Biodiversity Action Plan
- Monitor and review

It is thought that the giant hogweed from the Caucasus was introduced into Irish gardens at the end of the nineteenth century due to its architectural shape. It has spread into wild areas and causes problems when it makes contact with humans. The sap from the plant sensitises skin to sunlight, causing large, painful blisters. Photograph by Eddie Dunne.



CONSERVING IRELAND'S BIODIVERSITY

Invasive species – a growing threat to Ireland's native biodiversity

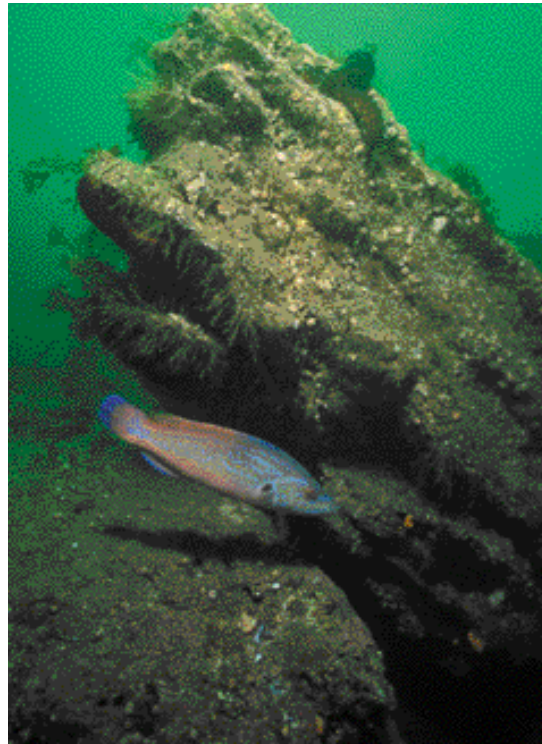
Non-native species that become invasive can transform ecosystems and threaten native species and terrestrial, marine, natural and semi-natural habitats. They can also damage economic interests, such as agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and can threaten public health. Invasive species are considered one of the biggest threats to biodiversity worldwide, and are a growing threat to Ireland's native biodiversity. Some of the best documented examples of the impact of invasive species in Ireland include rhododendron, *Rhododendron ponticum*, the zebra mussel, *Dreissena polymorpha*, and giant hogweed, *Heracleum mantegazzianum*.

Genetic diversity in agriculture

Agricultural activities have contributed to genetic diversity of domesticated species through cultivation, selection and breeding over millennia, resulting in a very large number of locally adapted livestock breeds or crop varieties. Modern farming practices draw on an increasingly narrow range of genetic variation in production, meaning many local breeds and varieties have been abandoned. Non-governmental organisations, like the Irish Seed Savers Association and the Irish Draught Horse Society have done enormous work to save local crop varieties and local livestock breeds from being lost from the genetic pool.

Ireland's rivers

Ireland is fortunate to have an extensive network of rivers and streams. These rivers are an enormously rich source of biological diversity. Despite deteriorated water quality, Ireland's rivers still



A cuckoo wrasse, *Labrus mixtus*, in Irish waters. Surveying fish and marine mammals is difficult, but the challenge of estimating biodiversity in marine microorganisms seems virtually impossible. Photograph by Eddie Dunne

support important populations of salmon, *Salmo salar*, white-clawed crayfish, *Austro potamo bius pallipes*, river lamprey, *Lampetra fluviatilis*, and brook lamprey, *L. planeri*, freshwater pearl mussel, *Margaritifera margaritifera*, and otter, *Lutra lutra*, all of which are listed for special protection measures under the EU Habitats Directive. The riches provided by our rivers cannot be measured in purely economic terms, yet it has been calculated that the overall salmon angling resource is worth in excess of €90 million.

The marine environment

Irish coastal waters are immensely important, if not the most important, component of Ireland's biological diversity, but our knowledge of the resource is incomplete. Twenty four species of cetacean (whales and dolphins) and at least 446 fish species have been recorded in Irish territorial waters. It has been estimated that there are at least 700 species of phytoplankton. But describing biodiversity according to species at the micro-organism scale in the marine environment creates unique difficulties. To put these difficulties in perspective, surveyors of marine macro-organisms are faced with tens to hundreds of individuals per cubic metre of water, but the abundance of micro-organisms will be several orders of magnitude greater. For this reason, a system of bacterial taxonomy has developed based on function rather than on structure, which fits poorly into the traditional, largely terrestrial-based classifications that underpin the convention on biological diversity. Clearly, if we are to halt biodiversity loss by 2010, which is the commitment of the European Union, then we have much work to do.

– Dr. Liam Lysaght, Ecologist,
The Heritage Council

Challenges and Opportunities

Archaeology in Contemporary Ireland



The remains of a Neolithic house uncovered during archaeological excavation in Kishoge townland, Dublin. The trenches excavated in the ground would have held upright timber posts (Courtesy of E O'Donovan of M Gowen & Co. Ltd)

Ireland is fortunate in that it possesses a series of archaeological field monuments dating from the prehistoric period up to the present day. These survive intact and above ground in our countryside and urban areas. Attempts at quantifying the numbers of such monuments have produced estimates of 120,000, and this is the approximate number detailed on the maps and lists produced by the Archaeological Survey of Ireland. However, the nature of the archaeological record is such that many other unidentified sites lie hidden beneath topsoil or buildings. Archaeologists have made significant advances in detecting such concealed sites by means of aerial photography and advanced surveying techniques.

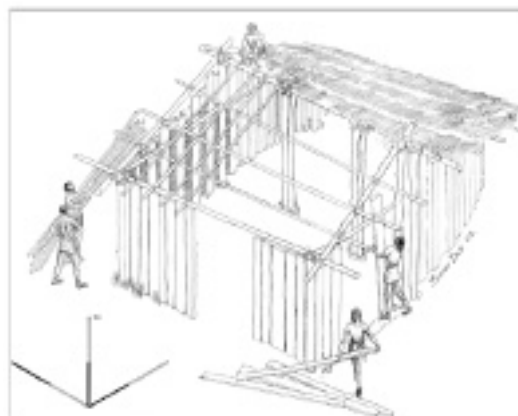
In line with the rapid changes to the Irish economy in recent years, the archaeological profession has undergone significant change. Some 15 years ago, a fledgling private sector existed alongside the longer established archaeologists in the National Museum of Ireland, the Office of Public Works, and in the universities. In the intervening period, the archaeological private sector has grown considerably. This is partly attributable to the completion of survey maps of archaeological sites and county inventories, as well as legislative requirements for environmental assessments and impact statements. The majority of archaeologists are now engaged as archaeological consultants and contractors in private practices of varying size. The greater part of this work is undertaken prior to development work such as National Development Plan infrastructural projects or housing construction, etc.

In the face of such obvious growth, the Heritage Council sought to assess the expansion

of the profession and to determine the developing needs of archaeologists. Accordingly, in 2002, the Heritage Council and the Institute of Archaeologists of Ireland (IAI) commissioned a report entitled *Profile of the Archaeological Profession and Educational Resources in Ireland*. This study found that, in mid-2002, some 650 archaeologists were employed in Ireland, North and South. A survey of some 400 archaeologists found that the respondents were divided almost equally by gender; the average age of the survey respondents was 37 years; and the majority of archaeologists were working on short-term contracts, particularly in the contracting sector. Contrary to recent media reports, the annual average earnings among respondents was in the region of €35,690. The clear need for a programme of further education and training was also articulated. The vast majority of archaeologists possess a primary degree and a high proportion also possess a postgraduate qualification. Most graduates find that further training is useful to make the transition to private practice and to facilitate additional learning. This need is currently being addressed by the design of a Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programme by the IAI. Such a programme, which will be implemented through the IAI with design funding by the Heritage Council, should allow for an improved service by the archaeological profession in the context of its rapid development.

An insight into the challenges and opportunities facing Irish archaeology at present can be gained by a cursory examination of the discovery of Neolithic houses. Structures from this period of the Stone Age (circa 4000-2000BC) consist of

rectangular or sub-circular buildings, usually with a hearth for heat, light and cooking. Some of the larger rectangular structures can measure up to 15 metres in length and possess internal subdivisions. It appears that vertical plank walling was a widely used construction technique, although buildings of post and wattle have also been uncovered and stone footings are also known. The roofs of these structures would have been thatched. Such buildings from the Neolithic period are rarely found in upstanding condition, and frequently only the impressions of posts survive in the ground. During excavation, the construction trenches used to accommodate such posts or planks become visible, particularly so if the building burned down. Traces of such burnt planks have been found in areas such as Kishogue, in South County Dublin, and Tankardstown South, Co Limerick; although whether such episodes of burning represent domestic accidents or aggressive acts is rarely clear.



The oldest known house from Co Dublin: Drawing of the Neolithic house from Kishogue during construction (Courtesy of E O'Donovan of M Gowen & Co. Ltd. Publication of this site is forthcoming in volume XII of the *Journal of Irish Archaeology*)

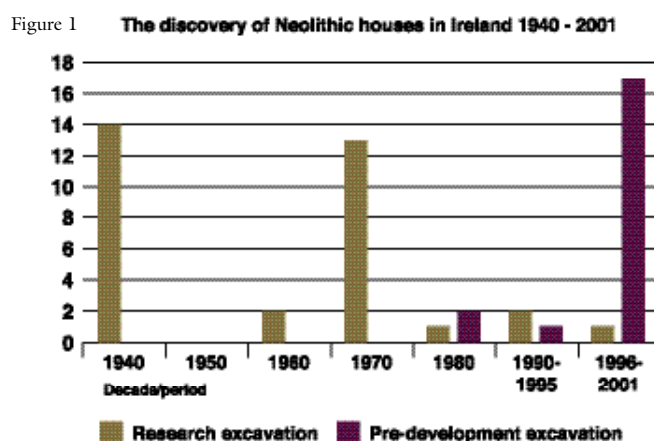


Figure 1 details the discovery of such Neolithic houses in Ireland during the period 1940 – 2001. This graph does not include the various class of huts and shelters which have also been excavated over the same period. The Neolithic house structures discovered during the 1940s represent the work of Professor SP Ó Ríordáin at the prehistoric settlement complex of Lough Gur, Co Limerick; similarly the work during the 1960s and 1970s largely represents the campaigns of excavations in Co Meath at the passage tombs of Newgrange and Knowth in the Boyne valley. Both decades also saw discoveries during research excavations at Slieve Breagh, Co Meath; Ballynagilly, Co Tyrone; and at Ballyglass, Co Mayo. During the 1980s, additional structures were uncovered outside of the Lough Gur and Boyne Valley areas, frequently during the construction of gas pipelines. One particularly marked trend has been the discovery of Neolithic structures during the so-called ‘Celtic Tiger’ years as part of predevelopment archaeological investigations. During the years 1996 – 2001 some 17 Neolithic houses were uncovered across Ireland, in counties Kerry, Antrim (2), Derry, Kildare (6), Louth (3), Mayo, Meath, and Dublin.

The recent discovery of such Neolithic structures represents a significant shift in the data available to archaeologists. A more island-wide distribution of Neolithic houses is now apparent, and this increase in our data-set allows for a greater insight into this period of Irish prehistory. It is now becoming possible to examine the use of domestic space within these houses, for example, certain artefacts can represent a particular type of activity in parts of a building. Similarly, the deliberate placing of portions of stone axe or broken pottery shards in the foundation trenches of structures can suggest ritual behaviour, while the examination of plant remains offers evidence of diet and agricultural practices. Archaeologists are beginning to think outside of the immediate space around such houses and are projecting the remains of these buildings into the wider Neolithic landscape. The role of such buildings within Neolithic communities was undoubtedly significant; vast effort was involved in constructing such timber buildings and they represent symbols of the ability of a community to alter the landscape and to form domestic space.

The pattern of discovery for such Neolithic structures can be repeated for the excavation of Bronze Age houses, Early Medieval ring-fort settlements or medieval rural settlements, where increased economic activity has prompted unprecedented levels of archaeological excavation and fieldwork. While this provides opportunities for employment and new discoveries, it also places strain on the profession to properly resource such work and on the State regulatory bodies to oversee this activity. The challenge also exists for the archaeological profession to digest and interpret such data, to publish it, and to make sure that the increase in our knowledge is used effectively. Such effective use of recently acquired data requires that it be used to inform the archaeological profession, and that the significance of this work be communicated more widely to the general public. This perhaps is the greatest challenge of all.

Ian Doyle, Archaeology Officer,
The Heritage Council



Freedom To Roam?

Free access to the countryside is a contentious issue.

Eleanor Flegg considers each side in the debate

Irish law is clear on the subject of access – if you want to cross privately owned land, you must have the permission of the landowner. It is not the case that you can walk anywhere you want. That walkers have, until recently, been widely tolerated is testimony to the easy-going nature of most landowners, and to the fact that the relatively small number of walkers caused little disruption to farming activities.

In Ireland, the vast majority of land is privately owned, and most of it is farmed. As with the fox hunting issue in the UK, access has become the focus of a division between urban and rural society, and elements of the farming community restrict access to walkers as a way of demonstrating their frustration. The dramatic polarisation of the issue at ground level has much to do with dissatisfaction with current agricultural policy. Although agriculture remains the lifeblood of rural society, an industry that makes a far greater contribution than can be measured in terms of production, it is currently an industry that feels semi-redundant, manipulated, and cross.

The ownership of land is particularly dear to the Irish psyche and we have a tendency to identify ourselves in terms of it. When walkers tramp across the family farm, many farmers feel that their ownership rights are being called into question. Fears that allowing access to walkers will create rights of way over property are unfounded. A waymarked way cannot cross private land without the permission of the landowner and establishes not a right of way but

a ‘permissive path’ which may be revoked by the landowner at any time. Although rights of way do exist in Ireland, the network is limited and the development of a network of walking routes has depended largely on agreement between the organisers and individual landowners. Due to the fragmented nature of landownership, it can be no small undertaking to trace landowners and find out if they are willing to allow a walking route to cross their land. A three-kilometre section of a recent projected route crossed land owned by 29 families, each of them with a story to tell. Some lived in Australia, some in the UK, some people didn’t know that they owned the land, and in some cases the owner couldn’t be identified.

The ownership of land is particularly dear to the Irish psyche

It is important to clarify that access to uplands is a separate matter from that of established walking routes or waymarked ways, which are low level, and carry relatively large numbers of walkers on signed routes previously agreed with the landowners. These two issues are often run together in the media and can be confused. Upland walkers are small in number and operate independently, their activities are concentrated in mountainous areas, and they require routes by which they can find a way up to the hills. This often involves crossing farmland. Farmers’ concerns about the insurance implications of allow-

ing walkers to access upland areas through their land are understandable. The Occupiers Liability Act (1995), so carefully negotiated by the farming sector, is being tested in the courts following the Rossenalagh ruling last summer. A woman who was injured after a fall from a scenic roadside embankment took a case against the landowners, the Franciscan Order, and was awarded damages when they were found liable. The case, which sets a dangerous precedent with alarming consequences for all landowners, is under appeal to the Supreme Court and is expected to be heard later this year. Until then, landowners have to continue to take 'due care' of any visitors on their land, but it is not clear how far they are liable.

The liability situation regarding way-marked ways is different. As part of the development of the route, an insurance policy is put in place whereby the landowner or occupier is indemnified against all claims by walkers of the route, even if they stray from it. The route is insured, developed, and maintained by the route promoter, usually the local authority or local development agency. To date, no case has been taken on a walking route recognized by the National Waymarked Ways Advisory Committee (NWWAC).

The Irish Farmers Association (IFA) maintains that farmers have the right to determine whether or not people have access to their lands, and that, if access is granted, there should be some form of remuneration for farmers whose lands are used for recreational purposes. The abolition of the access measure in the first Rural Environment Protection Scheme (REPS1) has been interpreted as establishing a precedent of payment for access, whereas in actual fact it merely compensated farmers for the improvement of facilities on their land. Few farmers

actually availed of this widely misunderstood measure, and it has had more impact in abolition than it ever did when it was available.

The walking community too is sharply divided: militant elements such as Keep Ireland Open (KIO) actively campaign for a legislative solution amounting to freedom to roam. In fact, the much quoted 'freedom to roam' in Scotland is a traditional privilege rather than a legal right, a de facto resumption of a historic arrangement interrupted by the sheep farming estates of the 18th and 19th centuries. Similarly in Sweden, freedom to roam relies on tradition rather than law. Other countries, such as Norway, Denmark, Germany, Austria, and Switzerland, do give some legal protection, while in England and Wales the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW) allows the public to walk freely on open country and registered common land shown on new official maps. There is no European norm for access issues, which are resolved individually, based on the landownership traditions of each country.

More moderate Irish organisations such as the Mountaineering Council of Ireland (MCI), the National Waymarked Way Advisory Committee of the Irish Sports Council (NWWAC), and the Heritage Council believe that access routes across farmland must be negotiated in partnership with landowners and the farming sector. There is general agreement among these groups that landowners should be paid to maintain access routes across their lands, but that direct payment for access would be problematic to administer. There is also a strong interest in this issue from the tourism sector – walking has been described as the silent performer in Irish tourism and there are fears that ongoing disruption may discourage tourists. There have been rumblings that hill-walking



holidays to Ireland may be on the decline at a time when Irish tourism can least afford it.

COMHAIRLE NA TUAITHE

In response to calls for a government-led Countryside Recreation Council, Comhairle na Tuaithe was established in January 2004 by Éamon Ó Cuív, Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. The current main aim of Comhairle na Tuaithe is to address issues relating to waymarked ways and access to land, and its creation follows the publication of the report of the Consultation Group on Access to Waymarked Ways. This council, which includes representatives from such disparate bodies as Coillte, Cork Kerry Tourism, Fáilte Ireland, The Heritage Council, ICMSA, IFA, Irish Sports Council, Irish Uplands Forum, Keep Ireland Open, The Mountaineering Council of Ireland, and Walking Cycling Ireland, will consider this important matter with respect to all countryside recreation activities and all who are affected by these activities. The new council will also include governmental and environmental representatives, should the Minister accept all of its recommendations. The Minister also announced that he intends to make provision for maintenance of waymarked or approved locally agreed walks to be included as rural services for the purpose of the new Rural Social Scheme. If this comes to fruition, it may form an acceptable replacement for the access measure in REPS1.

the much quoted 'freedom to roam' in Scotland is a traditional privilege rather than a legal right

The establishment of Comhairle na Tuaithe is good news for both the farming and the walking community, and it remains that the battle between walkers and farmers is not universal and many walks continue to work well at ground level. The success of the Wicklow Uplands Council, for example, lies in that it represents the interests of all parties: farming, landowning, community, environmental, recreational, economic, and tourism; and takes a partnership approach to sustainable development. There are many other instances around the country of walks that work well, and it may be that there is no sweeping national solution to the impasse. Whereas the introduction of a payment for farmers who maintain access routes is called for, some will see an advantage in allowing walkers to cross their land, and some will not. In all probability, the solution will remain local and piecemeal and will depend on how well the situation is handled at ground level by the individuals involved.

THE HERITAGE COUNCIL

- has promoted and facilitated countryside recreation since its establishment in 1995
- believes that countryside access and recreation offers people a way to enjoy, appreciate, and encounter many aspects of heritage, including landscape, wildlife, habitats, archaeology, and architecture
- sees the farming community as key to maintaining the fabric of our rural areas, environmentally, socially and culturally
- believes that users of walking routes may need to be made more aware of the requirements of farming and how to behave in the countryside
- recognizes that farmers should receive payment where they maintain routes that cross their land, on condition that these routes are in accordance with the agreed standards of the NWWAC in terms of path condition and information supplied
- believes that walking routes can also make a significant contribution to a balanced healthy lifestyle and that funding for preventative health care through promotion of access to the countryside should be investigated in the long term

GOOD PRACTICE FOR WALKERS

- Keep the number of cars used to the minimum; consider hiring a bus for group outings
- Park safely, with particular regard to allowing for entry to property. Many access problems have arisen from inconsiderate parking by recreational visitors. Remember that farmers work at weekends and that a tractor with a trailer attached needs a wide space to turn into a field or gateway
- All land is owned by somebody and we use that land with the goodwill of the owner, not with a legal right
- Avoid aggravating known problems, use approved routes in these areas
- Be friendly and courteous to landowners and local residents
- Respect private property and do not interfere with machinery, crops or animals
- Make no unnecessary noise, especially when passing houses
- Be careful not to damage fences, walls or hedges - these are livestock boundaries and expensive to repair
- Use stiles and gates where they exist, leave gates as you find them (open or closed)
- Leave no litter behind; even biodegradable items like banana skins and tea bags take years to disappear
- For environmental and safety reasons, keep group numbers small. Ideally group size should be less than 10 people and should never exceed 15.
- Avoid taking dogs on the hills at any time
- Walk on rock, stones, or the most durable surface available, rather than on vegetation or soft ground
- Avoid using eroded paths
- Avoid taking short cuts on zigzag paths as this creates new lines for run-off of water and increases erosion
- The building of cairns detracts from the wild character of the hills; new cairns can mislead other walkers
- Have respect for all natural things and take care not to disturb plants, birds, and animals

A recent 'Walk Safely' information leaflet produced by the MCI and NWWAC giving advice to all walkers in the Irish countryside is available from the Heritage Council and the MCI. See www.mountaineering.ie and www.heritagecouncil.ie

Heritage in Schools

Heritage Specialist **Conor Kelleher** describes his experience of teaching schoolchildren about Ireland's bats



Leisler's bat, *Nyctalus leisleri*, is just one of the Irish species to inspire budding young conservationists. Copyright Phil Richardson

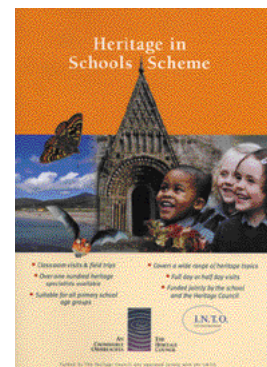
The Heritage in Schools Scheme was one of those brilliant ideas that succeeded beyond all expectations. The project is a collaboration between the Heritage Council and the Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO) and has grown to include over 100 specialists on different aspects of our national heritage, from the environmental to historical, and archaeological to zoological.

My own specialist area is the 'Chiroptera' or bats to the non-anorak! My visit to a school usually starts with a phonecall from a principal enquiring if I can give a presentation to pupils on the ecology of these much maligned creatures. Provided that the school can provide a darkened room for an illustrated talk, the answer is always 'yes'. I supply all the equipment to allow the children to view a one-hour slideshow on bats, their feeding and roosting habits, life histories, and the benefits of these animals to their local environment. The children are usually extremely enthusiastic as they have never seen bats depicted in this way. They are usually rapt as I explain, in easy-to-understand vocabulary, how we use bat detectors to access their inaudible world, and the class listens to sound recordings of bat calls and vocalisations.

The question and answer session that follows is often the highlight of the event for me as the children outdo each other with insightful

queries and stories of their own encounters with these animals. One has to be on one's toes, however, as the children are so bright, throwing pertinent questions at the lecturer. Also, I've discovered, if the children are told of the visit in advance, then one or more will read up on the subject so as to be prepared with the most difficult question they can muster!

The lecture is repeated with other classes resulting in a half- or full-day visit. This scheme opens the children's eyes to the wonders of nature, allowing them to receive first-hand knowledge from someone who has enthusiasm for and experience of these misunderstood animals. It allows me to share my thoughts and, hopefully, sow the seeds for future conservationists who will appreciate their countryside and its creatures. To encourage further study, activity sheets for various bat projects are provided to teachers for follow-up lessons for all age groups. Then, to the sound of the children chanting ... "na, na, na, na, na, na, na, BAT-MAN!", it's back to the batmobile and off to the next school. This work is magic!



For more details on The Heritage in Schools Scheme see The Heritage Council website

Slí Chaoimhín

Hillwalker **Emer Ní Bhrádaigh** describes her experience of St Kevin's Way, the pilgrim path from Hollywood to Glendalough

While roaming the hills of Ireland I often wonder whether I'm the first person ever to walk on that particular patch of ground. Invariably a scrap of paper or a plastic bag reminds me that I am following in the footsteps of many others. The sense of connecting with a common culture and heritage hit me most strongly when I walked part of the Camino de Santiago de Compostella and mused on the thousands of Irish pilgrims who made the journey by sea and on foot to Galicia on the northwest coast

hint that the small chapel has some connection with Glendalough nearly 30 kilometres away. One wonders what the connections were with St Brigid not far away in the town of Kildare.

Cooperation between a large number of people in developing St Kevin's Way, or Slí Chaoimhín is testament to the lasting value of the longstanding Irish tradition of a 'meitheal', or work party. Joss Lynam, recognized among many mountaineers as the father of Irish mountaineering, and Peter Harbison, historian and archaeologist, are the authors of the Heritage Council's informative booklet and guide to this Way or Slí. The Slí, and retracing the steps of St Kevin's followers, would not have been possible without the cooperation and support of many other interested parties, such as Wicklow County Council, the Irish Farmers Association, local landowners, and members of various religions and religious orders.

I had always been fascinated by the 'site of



of Spain. However, these same pilgrims and plenty of their compatriots no doubt followed the various pilgrim routes to holy places here in Ireland, places where people felt a particular connection with nature, with a higher being, with their own spiritual essence. Which came first – the nuns and monks building their monasteries and abbeys, or the special energy already known to locals? Why did people choose to walk along open moorland, through mountain passes, through damp, wet, unforgiving bog, in all kinds of weather to reach places such as Gleann Dá Loch, where Caoimhín or Kevin had established a monastery in the sixth or seventh century? In addition to rediscovering our ancient spiritual and religious heritage, we are thankfully reclaiming our language and it's often through the original Irish placenames that we begin to uncover the lost secrets of our past. Hollywood in Co Wickow, near the Co Kildare border and on the road from Dublin to Baltinglass, is called Cillín Chaoimhín in Irish – a

St Kevin's Way' marked on my hillwalking maps, and wishing to engage more with the cultural heritage as well as the natural environment of the Wicklow uplands, I eventually retraced part of the Way, rather appropriately on Easter Saturday, the day of reflection between Good Friday and Easter Sunday.

Any portion of the Slí can be walked. Those wishing to have a short varied walk with children, encompassing the variety of bog, waterfall, boulders, river and woods can easily arrange a lift to a starting point around four or five kilometres up from Glendalough towards the Wicklow Gap. More adventurous teenagers would prefer a longer walk from the Gap, while those interested in the challenge of a long distance walk of just over five hours could start in Cillín Chaoimhín, a full 26 kilometres away. There are many places to park cars along the route, which is never more than one kilometre from the road. A car at both ends, or a lazy obliging friend can eliminate the

Chapel ruins
on St. Kevin's
Way, Wicklow



need to retrace one's steps. While this walk is near the road, it is always important for walkers to be prepared for the unexpected. A healthy distrust of weather forecasts and of clear morning skies should lead people to always wear sturdy boots and enough clothes, carry a raincoat, and have water and food.

As the highest point of St Kevin's Way is at the Wicklow Gap at only 450 metres above sea level, and as the path is never too far from the road, this is an ideal way for beginners to enjoy the Wicklow hills and really feel that they are on a historical path, safely exploring the route and terrain over which thousands walked, in their devotion to God and to St Kevin and to a simpler more spiritual way of life. They knew as they set off from the starting point in Hollywood, long before the current 18th century chapel was built, that their long journey would be rewarded with the sight of the round tower of Glendalough as they emerged out of the valley of Glendasan into the valley of Glendalough. By the time they reached the Wicklow Gap, they knew they were more than half way, and for me I felt I was connecting more than half way back to those pilgrims as I looked in amazement at the excavated paving stones of the original Pilgrim Road across the bog. It struck me that despite religious, cultural and political differences, each tradition – from Europeans on the Camino to Santiago de Compostella to the Incas on their way to Machu Pichu - has its own pilgrim route and holy place.

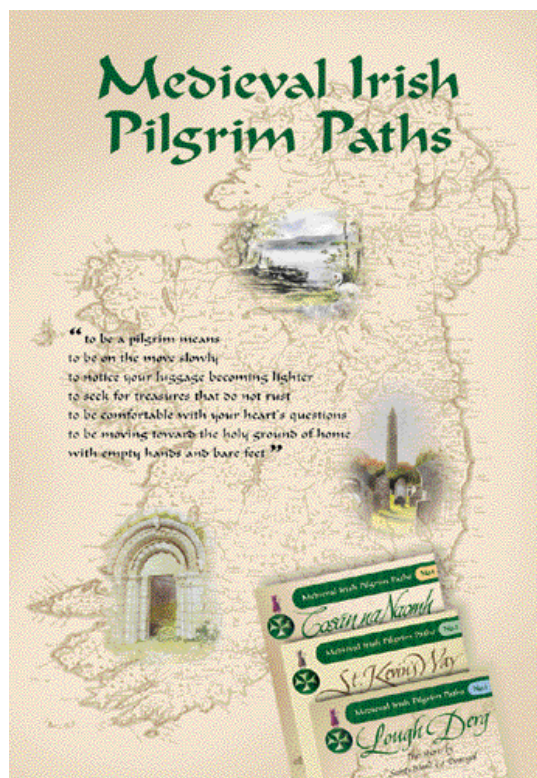
Mankind leaves his mark on the surrounding landscape, from the old mining buildings to the more modern ESB electricity generation plant, each making use of the local environment to build a better life, each finding his own way of crossing the bog. The route is well marked with small wooden markers with a yellow monk, providing a constant reminder that monks and lay people alike walked the same route. We stopped for lunch at the ruin of an old house. Had pilgrims stopped at the same house to exchange greetings with the residents or to ask for direc-

tions, wondering whether it was best to descend to the right or the left of the river. We took the challenge of leaving the path for a while and clambered down the boulders of a steep part of the Glendasan river, but could have easily stayed on the road. We encountered people out picnicking on what was one of the first sunny days of spring, while others stopped to enjoy the view before driving away again. How easy it would have been for them to leave the car for a few hours and join us on this well-marked trail - to perhaps absorb more of the environment, to stay awhile on a heathery slope listening to birds and spotting spring flowers. The most memorable part of the walk was the last stretch along the river, with the gorse in full bloom perfectly reflected in the clear calm water, trees overhead creating a sparkle of light filtering through the spring leaves. We passed two retreat houses before rounding the corner to the surprise of a cottage in the foreground surrounded by trees through which we could see the round tower, signalling the end of our walk and the reward of the first ice cream cones of spring – a reminder that even pilgrims have earthly desires and weaknesses!

Emer Ní Bhrádaigh is a lecturer in Entrepreneurship in DCU and a keen hillwalker

For information on safe and environmentally sustainable walking, see the Mountaineering Council of Ireland website: www.mountaineering.ie

Comprehensive map guides for Cosán na Naomh, Lough Derg and St Kevin's Way are available at www.heritagecouncil.ie



A House in the Country



As the Government releases new guidelines on rural development, Planning Officer Stephen Rhys-Thomas explores the emotive issue of one-off housing

Much recent housing in the countryside is inappropriately designed and visually obtrusive. Currently, only 10–12% of one-off rural houses are designed by an architect.

The Department of the Environment, Heritage, and Local Government recently released a consultative draft policy document – *Sustainable Rural Housing Consultation Draft Guidelines for Planning Authorities* – to provide guidelines in relation to one-off rural housing. Essentially, the Government favours one-off rural housing with accordance to good planning principles, such as traffic safety and ground-water protection. The new guidelines ensure that people who are part of, or linked to, the rural community will get planning permission for houses. These people, subject to eligibility as defined by the local authority, include farmers and their children, people who work in rural areas, and those who have lived most of their lives there. In rural areas suffering persistent and substantial population decline, anyone wishing to build a house will be accommodated, subject to good planning practice, even if they have no roots in the area. There are numerous conditions and exceptions to this rule; however, it is assumed that rural housing will be permitted save for exceptional circumstances described in the guidelines. The premise for this change of policy is to enliven a dying rural community base, and to ensure that the people who belong to a rural area or who need to live there will be able to build houses. The Minister for the Environment, Martin Cullen, feels so strongly about this that planning authorities are being instructed to implement the new guidelines even though they are still in draft form.

This policy replaces a strategy published by the Government in 1997 to achieve sustainable development in Ireland, which contained a presumption against granting permission for urban-generated housing in rural areas. Despite this, one-off rural housing has thrived over the last seven years, accounting for at least 36% of houses built in Ireland each year. Local authorities have approved 85% of applications for one-off houses. An Taisce has appealed approximately four out of every 1,000 of these planning decisions, usually on the grounds of the risk of groundwater con-



tamination from septic tanks, the creation of traffic hazards, or visual obtrusiveness. These appeals were based on public policy, and 90% were upheld by An Bord Pleanála. Just 6% of the total number of decisions to grant permission have been refused on appeal.

A considerable outcry has accompanied the recent projected change in policy; rural housing is a contentious issue. People like to live in beautiful countryside, they often like to live close to their families or in the place that they grew up, and they like to live in a house that has been built to suit their requirements. It is also considerably cheaper to build than to buy, and the option of building on land that may already be in family ownership is an attractive one. However, one-off rural housing has the potential to raise a number of issues. These include: groundwater pollution from domestic septic tanks; increased traffic hazard due to new vehicle entrances; visually obtrusive and inappropriately designed houses; habitat fragmentation due to inappropriate planting and removal of existing habitats; social isolation due to dispersed housing patterns; unsustainable car dependency; a greater burden on rural transport systems; a stretching of resources with regard to social services; and increased surface erosion caused by the increased use of minor roads. There are also fears that people will build and sell on – it would seem an obvious way of making money.

The policy is also at variance with certain aspects of the National Spatial Strategy, which seeks to accommodate housing needs within existing settlements. The guidelines argue that Ireland has always had a rural and scattered settlement pattern. While this is true, historical patterns of development are inextricably linked to the economic forces of the time; transport in the past was primarily by foot, and the economy was based around agriculture and local production. We risk recreating an anachronistic settlement pattern in a world that has changed beyond imagining. An over-supply of one-off rural housing sites could make it less attractive to develop villages and



It is best to keep the shape of the house very simple, minimising modelling of the front façade, and incorporating the simplicity of older houses in the area.

towns. As car dependency grows, people will tend to use the services in the larger centres to which they commute. At worst the countryside could come to resemble a dispersed suburb from which people travel by car to work, shops, and schools, with worsening congestion at peak times, even on rural lanes. Even now, in many rural areas, the roads carry so much traffic that it is no longer safe to walk to school or to the local shops. There is concern that new vehicular entrances will cause traffic hazards on rural roads. Local authorities are put in an impossible situation in this regard: they are instructed to remove hedgerows from the entrances to one-off houses to improve visibility, and at the same time to protect and maintain

hedgerows for the sake of biodiversity.

The need to protect the quality of our water is also a major consideration. One-off rural housing depends on effluent treatment systems, in most cases septic tanks and percolation areas, and more frequently mechanically operated systems. If these are faulty or poorly maintained, the resultant run-off will cause ground and surface water pollution. There is as yet no effective compliance or monitoring regime to ensure that domestic effluent treatment systems do not pollute water and such a system is at present beyond the scope of pressured rural authorities. Ireland's water resource is currently among the best in the EU and must be maintained under the Water Framework Directive. The minister may yet insist on putting monitoring measures in place to ensure that effluent treatment systems do not pollute ground and surface water.

We risk recreating an anachronistic settlement pattern in a world that has changed beyond imagining

Another problem is that much recent housing in rural locations is both inappropriately designed and visually obtrusive. The guidelines set out standards for good design and encourage planning authorities to develop their own design guidelines, but these are accompanied by fears that planning authorities will either become a type of 'style police' or will zealously promote 'traditional vernacular' development at the expense of allowing innovative contemporary design. These fears may be unfounded. Cork County Council has



produced a very sensible book, *Cork Rural Design Guide: Building a New House in the Countryside*, by Colin Buchanan and Partners and Mike Shanahan and Associates, which offers many solutions to rural design issues. The advice is to keep the shape of the house very simple, minimising modelling of the front façade, and incorporating the simplicity of older houses in the area. Recommending that an architect should be engaged, the authors encourage concentrating on proportion, scale, and form rather than detail as ‘no amount of frills will compensate for a potentially clumsy, awkward and unattractive structure’. Currently, as it is considerably cheaper to manage without, only 10–12% of one-off rural houses are designed by an architect. The guide indicates that the new house should be located in the most sheltered part of the site, orientated to maximise daylight and solar gain, and set back from the road with a secluded garden behind retained hedgerows. The emphasis is on linking the structure with the countryside around it, treating house, garden, and landscape as a unit, and using indigenous plants. Although other county councils have produced rural housing design guides, this is one of the best and is admirably clear on what works in the countryside and what does not.

The consultative guidelines clearly set out the various elements of heritage and the need to identify and protect it, with an emphasis on pre-planning discussions. It is accepted that local authorities should clearly map all areas of natural and cultural heritage in order to inform policy decisions in relation to rural housing. However, it is widely believed that the systems that are currently in place to deal with heritage issues in relation to planning will not be able to cope with the extra workload. The Minister may consider addressing the staffing issues within the rural planning authorities, and it may be useful to have heritage expertise located within the local authority structure to speed up the consultation process. The Heritage Council have developed a heritage appraisal methodology to be applied to development plans which has proved successful in the past in highlighting problems areas. It is envisaged that the Heritage Council will continue to carry out this work as a third party neither connected to the local authority or the Government.

Ultimately, the overall policy does not address the issue of sustainability in any meaningful way. The new guidelines have not addressed the issue of improving the quality of our towns and villages whilst promoting a rural lifestyle. To allow one-off rural housing go unchecked may result in the decline of our smaller rural settlements and damage the sustainability and viability of rural communities in the present and in times to come.

Stephen Rhys-Thomas
is Planning Officer with the Heritage Council

bungalow nation

a poem by Trish Casey

What this country needs is another bungalow
with two white neo-classical PVC columns
at the front door.

(Go on will yeah, go on!)

Four white neo-classical PVC columns
holdin’ up the open porch.

(Go on will yeah, go on!)

Six white neo-classical PVC columns
stretchin’ the len’th o’ the concrete
Italianate veranda.

(Nnyaaa!)

What this country needs is another bungalow
with six white neo-classical PVC columns
stretchin’ the len’th o’ the concrete Italianate veranda
and a big white cast-concrete eagle on the front lawn.

(Go on will yeah, go on!)

Two big white cast-concrete eagles on the front lawn.
(Nnyaaa!)

What this country needs is another bungalow
with six white neo-classical PVC columns
stretchin’ the len’th o’ the concrete Italianate veranda
and two big white cast-concrete eagles
on the front lawn

and two huge “feck off” pillars at the front gate.
(Go on will yeah, go on!)

Two huge “feck off” pillars at the front gate
covered with that black and white pebble dashin’
that looks like it came off a grave from
the local cemetery.
(Nnyaaa!)

What this country needs is another bungalow
with six white neo-classical PVC columns
stretchin’ the len’th o’ the concrete Italianate veranda
and two big white cast-concrete eagles
on the front lawn

and two huge “feck off” pillars at the front gate
covered with that black and white pebble dashin’
that looks like it came off a grave from the local
cemetery

and topped with two

massive mad

roarin’

LIONS.

(Nnnnyaaa!)

Trish Casey is from Cobh in Co. Cork.

In April this year,

this poem won the Cúirt Literary Festival
Grand Slam in Galway.

GALLERY Daragh Muldowney

Daragh Muldowney exhibits his work under the title DÚLRA Photography, ‘dúlra’ meaning elements of nature. Daragh captures his subjects as they present themselves naturally, without the use of artificial light. He believes it's the smaller detail in nature that we too readily overlook. All of Daragh's images are signed limited editions. Available in native ash frame or blockmounted, Daragh creates pieces of art that can be commissioned to suit your home or business. Sizes range from 16" x 10" up to 6' x 4' prints.
www.dulraphotography.com, email: daragh@dulraphotography.com



Wicklow Ice “A small waterfall in the Wicklow mountains had frozen in January creating these beautiful icicles. I find it interesting to turn it upside-down so that people don't recognize it immediately.”



Fractal Leaf A leaf shot from the underside with the light illuminating the leaf veins.

An End To The Open House?

Dr Hugh Maguire discusses the decline in visitors to our historic homes



Historic house museums form a distinctive component in our cultural landscape. There are a growing number of historic houses open to the public, so much so that there is now a crisis, acknowledged internationally if not here in Ireland. In the United States, there are over 6,000 houses open to the public! And yet the numbers visiting continue to decline, if not dramatically, then incrementally, slowly but surely. Houses with fine gardens are bucking this trend, no doubt reflecting the current vogue for gardening. Elsewhere, house museums are at their full capacity – notably the Georgian House, Bath, which with around 40,000 visitors per annum cannot accommodate any more. That the Ann Frank House Museum, Amsterdam, manages nearly one million visitors is something of a logistical nightmare, especially given the very purposefully cramped conditions of its ‘secret’ spaces.

If anything, with a number of exceptions, Ireland presents the opposite problem – too few visitors. And yet, as Pat Cooke has addressed more widely in his *The Containment of Heritage* (2002), there may already be too many properties here for the limited market and limited resources. This is particularly pronounced with National Trust-owned houses in Northern Ireland, which are effectively being subsidised by sister properties in England. In the Republic of Ireland, slack visitor numbers are compounded by the demands of astounding insurance premiums and the inconsis-

tencies, and contradictory demands, of tax-relief schemes, creating a climate in which house opening is almost pointless, at least from a financial point of view. But the calls for houses to be opened continue. It was alluded to with Ballyfin, Co Laois and was most pronounced over Lissadell House, Co Sligo. Ironically this, the one ‘grand house’ in the country for which there appeared to be some groundswell of public support, even if based on a romantic interpretation of its past, was not taken into public ownership. Self-appointed interpreters of that past were swift to say the State had no interest in purchasing the property. Perhaps the fact that it was popular was just too unpalatable for some.

Designed by Scottish architect William Burn (1789-1870) and situated in Killarney National Park, Muckross House and Gardens are among the most popular of Irish visitor attractions. Photograph courtesy of Muckross House.

visitors are no longer particularly in awe of this being the home of so and so, even less so given that the average visitor may have more ‘spendoligs’ than the historic house owner

There are many reasons for the decline in visitor numbers internationally. The sameness of experience in each house is high on the list of factors - ‘Seen one seen them all’. Only the trained and expert eye may derive some pleasure from the subtle changes between one early Neo-Palladian villa and another. How many portraits of ‘great-uncle Field Marshall Whatever’ can the visitor

take? The quality of visitor experience and expectation has also shifted from the initial wave of house openings in the 1950s and 1960s. Visitors want to be engaged with rather than spoken at. Shifts in social perception and the demise of defence means that visitors are no longer particularly in awe of this being the home of so and so, even less so given that the average visitor may have more 'spendooligs' than the historic house owner. For parents with children in tow, the roped off dining room display, with precious family heirloom porcelain so tantalisingly touchable, can prove more stressful than relaxing. The failure, or inability, of houses to engage with contemporary museum practice and pedagogy can also hasten the departure of paying visitors. And herein lie dilemmas for the curator or house owner.

It may be taken as given that the average visitor prefers to come upon various historic rooms presented as though the family have momentarily moved out. At the same time, the average visitor has come to expect a wide, and sometimes dazzling, array of touch-screens, narrative panels and so forth. Clearly their placement in a fine historic room, or in the access rooms of what otherwise may be a family home is disruptive and inappropriate. If there are no suitable outbuildings conveniently placed, then the contradictory problems cannot be reconciled. These problems are even more pronounced at historic house museums in towns and cities. There is no additional space. And what space may be available in a basement or attic is either cramped and dingy or completely incompatible with contemporary health and safety regulations.

Visitor expectations and conservation best practice are also incompatible. We expect our rooms to be light-filled, warm and airy. And yet such conditions may destroy the actual objects and contents upon which we gaze. Staircases designed for the pitter-patter of satin bootees are not equipped for the mountain boots of the rucksacked visitor. Heavy, expensive fabrics designed to be appreciated by the delicate light of evening candles cannot withstand the sunlight glare of unshuttered windows. Occasionally it may be possible to present such a darkened room as part of the visitor's experience as is currently done at Muckcross House, Killarney, but a whole series of

interiors presented in this way would frighten the visitor away.

The debate in Ireland, and it is a limited debate, has tended to focus on historic houses only in reference to grand country-seats, the ubiquitous 'big house', the focus of much architectural history and a surfeit of literary effort. Here the focus has been on the maintenance of the building fabric and occasionally the historic collection, without any long-term, realistic, and sustainable strategy. There is virtually no consideration of the presentation of these houses as 'museums'. Nor is there acknowledgement of the diversity of historic house museums, which indeed includes Pearse's Cottage near Rosmuc, Michael Dwyer's cottage in Wicklow and the Pearse town house in Pearse Street, Dublin, among others. If reflecting diverse and indeed contradictory political traditions and cultures, their concerns are indeed comparable and need to be addressed as such.

Staircases designed for the pitter-patter of satin bootees are not equipped for the mountain boots of the rucksacked visitor

Acknowledging the shared concerns for historic house museums, the Paris-based International Council of Museums (ICOM) established an international committee for Historic House Museums (DEMHIST) in 1999. DEMHIST now has a global membership ranging from former royal palaces in Berlin to the homes of revolutionaries in Bolivia. It exists as a forum for dialogue between those with comparable concerns, and an ongoing series of international conferences has highlighted the shared nature of these challenges. With the support of the Heritage Council and the ESB, a one-day seminar was hosted last summer at No 29 Fitzwilliam Street, Dublin. On a practical level, such meetings encourage dialogue even if solutions are not always readily forthcoming. The next international conference will be in Berlin, from September 2nd to 4th, 2004.

Dr Hugh Maguire

is Secretary/Treasurer of DEMHIST

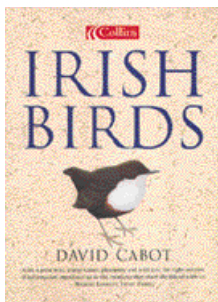
Email: secretarytreasurer@demhist.icom.museum

The Back Drawing Room at No 29, Lower Fitzwilliam Street, Dublin. Over 25,000 visitors enjoy this fully restored Georgian House each year. It provides an exhibition of middle class home life in Dublin circa 1790-1820. Photograph courtesy of the Electricity Supply Board.



Some windows in Muckcross House are shuttered, recreating the soft lighting the original occupants would have been used to, but most importantly helping to protect the contents from decay. Photograph courtesy of Muckcross House.

“BOOKS”



Irish Birds By David Cabot

Browsing amongst the natural history sections of bookshops and libraries, one will find various encyclopaedic publications of flora and fauna of Britain and Europe. But how will I know if that ‘bird of prey’ I spotted over the moorlands was a buzzard, a kite, an osprey or even an eagle? Do these birds exist in Ireland? For anyone with a leaning towards nature who seeks to learn more about Ireland’s birdlife, David Cabot’s *Irish Birds* will be a welcome find. This attractive and well-illustrated, compact hard-back describes and illustrates 167 of the most frequently occurring birds in Ireland. Easy to read, with non-technical text, this publication is accessible to all ages and levels of interest and may be used as a reference source for the primary school nature essay as well as travelling in the backpack or car glove compartment of the aspiring birdwatcher.

The book describes birds according to their most likely habitat and includes six colour-coded sections: Gardens, Parks and Buildings, Farmland and Hedgerow (including intensive and extensive farming), Woodland and Scrubland, Moorland and Upland, Freshwater and Coastal areas (including rocky coasts and soft shores). Each habitat section is introduced with illustrative photography and interesting commentary on the distribution, condition and usage of that habitat. Species descriptions include physical characteristics, with useful tips on distinguishing commonly misidentified species, such as the cormorant and shag. Bird names are also listed in Irish along with the common and Latin versions, which adds to the national interest of this book. Other interesting features are the details included on Ireland’s endangered species, such as the corncrake, with census figures from core areas. The book encourages further development of identification skills with descriptions of bird groups and a section on factors such as plumage marks and bill shape.

Having whetted the interest of the developing naturalist, the book satisfies further curiosity on where to observe birds with a ‘Places to visit’ section detailing 74 of the best birdwatching sites in Ireland. Useful information on birding websites, conservation organisations and other bird publications is also provided. *Irish Birds* is great value and should be added to any natural history library.

Reviewed by Bernadette Guest, Heritage Officer, Westmeath County Council

Published by Collins 2004

ISBN 0 00 717610 4 Price €18.99



Exploring the Burren The Irish Treasures Series By George Cunningham

Exploring the Burren is a 48-page concise introduction to this well-known area. Due to size limitations, this can only be an introduction, but the author does a very good job of covering such a huge subject. Sections include the cultural landscape: Prehistory, Archaeology; the Bronze Age, Iron Age, Christian and Medieval Times; and the natural history of the Burren, including Geology, Turloughs, Flora and Fauna.

One of the questions I had of this guide was what area the ‘Burren’ actually covers. I was glad to see the author had attempted to answer this question on the first page: “the Burren is delineated only by one’s perception of what it is, and to the botanist that is limestone country... the Burren uplands extends over 360 square kilometres with at least another 200 square kilometres covering a variety of landforms.” The text is quite rightly illustrated with lots of images, allowing limited space for content on each section, and leaving the reader with a hunger for more, and this must ultimately be the aim of any good guide book. I found the most interesting section was that on the Burren ‘Underground’. I learned that, to date, over 50km of underground caves - the active river systems of the area - have been charted. These active systems, with awesome swallow-holes and sink-holes, consume the 1500mm of annual rainfall that this area receives (as compared with 700mm in the east of Ireland), and can only be explored by experienced speleologists. Most visitors would see the Burren as a dry stoney land, but it’s intriguing to think of this complex water system running underground, below the clints and grykes that have made this landscape famous.

Exploring the Burren is part of the Irish Treasures Series, published by Townhouse. Other books in this series include: *Walled Towns in Ireland; Crannogs; Irish Round Towers; Irish Shrines & Reliquaries of the Middle Ages; Stone Circles in Ireland; Early Celtic Art in Ireland; Irish Archaeology from the Air; and Irish High Crosses*. There are over 20 of these titles, making the Irish Treasures Series a great addition to any library, and a great resource for schools, tourist centres, and libraries.

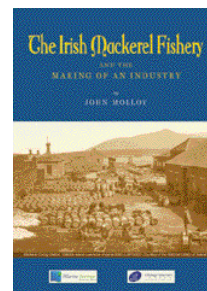
Reviewed by Juanita Browne

Published by TownHouse

ISBN 0946172595

Exploring the Burren, Price €7.55

The Irish Treasures Series is available through bookshops and online at www.townhouse.ie



The Irish Mackerel Fishery and the making of an Industry By John Molloy

John Molloy, Ireland’s leading expert on mackerel and herring fisheries has recently published *The Irish mackerel fishery and the making of an industry* – a 245-page history of one of Ireland’s most profitable fisheries. The book features a wealth of anecdotes, historical facts and figures, and is lavishly illustrated in full colour. Published by the Marine Institute and the Killybegs Fishermen’s Organisation, all proceeds from the book will go to two Killybegs charities – The Royal National Lifeboat Institution and the Killybegs Community Hospital.

Molloy’s book covers four main areas: the biology of mackerel; the development of the mackerel fishery in Ireland; Irish scientific investigations over the years; and finally, the methods by which stocks are assessed and advice is given each year.

The first three sections will be of interest to all those involved with the industry; the scientist author has managed to look at the fishery from a personal viewpoint. The history and the development of the Irish mackerel fishery is really fascinating, even to the reader with no connections with the industry. Today, the mackerel fishery is perhaps the single most important entity of the Irish fishing industry – both in terms of value and quantity of fish landed. Molloy provides a summary of the current state of the stock and its likely development in the immediate future.

The last section, on international scientific assessments, highlights the many problems that beset fish stock assessments – problems in dealing with catch statistics, poor biological data, and changes in migrations. Perhaps after they read this book, managers will understand how difficult these assessments can be! The author expresses the hope that people involved in the mackerel industry will find this book interesting because “in the end it is they who have the responsibility of utilising this resource to provide a livelihood for communities that may not have very many alternatives”.

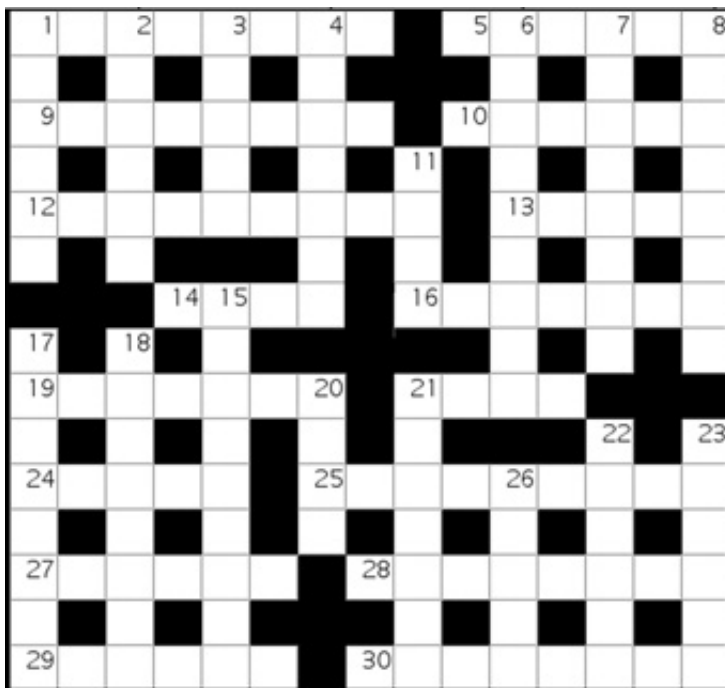
The Irish Mackerel Fishery and the making of an Industry is available from the Marine Institute and the Killybegs Fishermen’s Organisation.

Price €25.99 (including p&cp).

Please send a cheque, made payable to the Marine Institute, to: Fisheries Science Services, Marine Institute, Galway Technology Park, Parkmore, Galway. Or send a cheque, made payable to the Killybegs Fishermen’s Organisation, to: Bruach na Mara, St Catherine’s Road, Killybegs, Co Donegal.

Crossword No. 2

(compiled by Nóinín)



ACROSS

1. Permanent structure providing protection (8)
5. Serviceable and efficient (6)
9. Relating to riverbanks (8)
10. Native freshwater fish under threat in some of our lakes; sounds like it could give you hay-fever! (6)
12. Much, much too much! (9)
13. Cuts down these stretches of moorlands (5)
14. Eager and expectant (4)
16. These paths are so-called because they follow the medieval routes of sacrifice and devotion (7)
19. Did Il Duce eat or give intellectual or moral instruction (7)
21. Is it a seafish, male voice or instrument (4)
24. Type of fissure found in the 1 Down (5)
25. We saw energy expended for pleasure on these shared-use routes (9)
27. Prescribed order of performing rites (6)
28. Flora and fauna are protected by this Act (8)
29. Planetary bodies – can we have the best of both? (6)
30. Areas of marsh, fen, turlough or bog (8)

DOWN

1. The ***** - 'limestone desert' – home to Lusitanian plants and many dolmens (6)
2. The 'I' in EIS (6)
3. Did these short daggers belong to Mr Bogarde? (5)
4. If you can engrain something, you're getting close (7)
6. Always to be expected in January and February (9)
7. Study of traditional beliefs and stories (8)
8. Leo's omen is so solitary and forlorn (8)
11. Tower or stronghold to retain (4)
15. Place containing ancestral remains (9)
17. 15% of our native broadleaves are found in this network (8)
18. More old-fashioned (8)
20. Therefore (4)
21. Type of cells or clochans scattered along West coast (7)
22. Community of people of mainly common descent (6)
23. Tiny rocky pieces of land surrounded by water (6)
26. Donal is situated at a joint! (5)

To win a book voucher worth €50, please send your completed grid to:

HERITAGE OUTLOOK
Crossword Competition,
Attention: Isabell
The Heritage Council,
Rothe House, Parliament
Street, Kilkenny, Co
Kilkenny.

Closing date: Sept. 30th 2004

Congratulations to **Mick O'Connell** from Killarney who sent in the winning entry for our last crossword competition.

Answers to Crossword no. 1,

Heritage Outlook Winter 2003:

Across: 1. schedule; 5. O'Casey; 9. heritage; 10. grants; 12. mail; 13. Antarctica; 15. opus; 17. heather; 20. Shannon; 22. pier; 25. emigration; 26. Tara; 28. gramme; 29. verified; 30. basics; 31. sturgeon

Down: 1. scheme; 2. Harris; 3. duty; 4. legends; 6. cornrake; 7. sunlight; 8. yes; 11. Rath; 14. acre; 16. panoramic; 18. isle; 19. habitats; 21. NATO; 22. protect; 23. famine; 24. Gandon; 27. Birr; 28. gab

Letters TO THE Editor

The editor welcomes
your letters. Please send
submissions to:

The Editor,
Heritage Outlook,
The Heritage Council,
Kilkenny.

Or email
mail@heritagecouncil.com

Your comments and feedback
or most welcome, please
include contact details.

Notice Board

JUNE

JUNE-JULY

IRISH WHALE AND DOLPHIN GROUP - 'WHALE EXHIBITION' at ENFO, 17 St Andrew St, Dublin 2. Dates TBC. For details, contact ENFO Tel. 1890-200191 or see www.enfo.ie

JUNE 3

WEXFORD WILDFOWL RESERVE - LADY'S ISLAND LAKE WILDLIFE WALK 7.30pm 'Life on the Lake' by David Daly, Artist and Warden at the Tern Colony. For more information please contact Christopher Wilson at Wexford Wildfowl Reserve, Tel. 053-23129 or email: cwilson@duchas.ie

JUNE 10

WEXFORD WILDFOWL RESERVE LECTURE - The Living Sandcastle' by Jason Monaghan, National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), 8pm. For more information please contact Christopher Wilson at Wexford Wildfowl Reserve, Tel. 053-23129 or email: cwilson@duchas.ie

JUNE 11-13

WORLD OCEANS FESTIVAL - The Beach, Tramore, Co Waterford. In association with T-Bay Surf and Wildlife Centre, the Irish Wildlife Trust and the Irish Whale and Dolphin Group. A weekend of beach events (talks, walks, and water sports). IWDG talks and dolphin rescue exercises on Saturday, June 12th. The planned events include ecological/environmental displays, guided walks and presentations. A surfing competition (Ireland vs Wales), kite-surfing display, beach volleyball, beach art, plus lots more. All events are free of charge, everyone is welcome. Want to help? Would you like to help plan this event, or help out on one of the days? If so, please contact Marie Power, IWT, Tel. 051-386329 or email marpower@eircom.net

JUNE 17

WEXFORD WILDFOWL RESERVE LECTURE - 'Bird Ringing in Ireland' by Alyn Walsh, NPWS, 8pm. For more information please contact Christopher Wilson at Wexford Wildfowl Reserve, Tel. 053-23129 or email: cwilson@duchas.ie

JUNE 18-20

IRISH WHALE AND DOLPHIN GROUP - Weekend Whale Watching Course on Tory Island, Co Donegal. Contact Simon Berrow, Tel. 086-8545450, email: simon.berrow@iwdg.ie



© Robert Thompson

JULY 18-23

WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHY COURSE - A Birdwatch Ireland course at Cape Clear, by renowned wildlife photographer Eddie Dunne. Cape Clear promises a range of topics for your lens ranging from 'macro' subjects such as lichens, mosses, flowers and the

life of rock pools to birds and landscapes. Fee: €195. For more details see www.birdwatchireland.ie, email: info@birdwatchireland.org or Tel. 01-2819878

JUNE 24

WEXFORD WILDFOWL RESERVE LECTURE - 'A Taste of Antarctica' Christopher Wilson 'NPWS', 8pm. For more information please contact Christopher Wilson at Wexford Wildfowl Reserve, Tel. 053-23129 or email: cwilson@duchas.ie

JUNE 26

IRISH GEORGIAN SOCIETY (Ireland's Architectural Heritage Society) - In the Footsteps of Edward Martyn and the Celtic Revival - Day Tour to Galway, visiting Loughrea Cathedral, Tulira Castle, and Kiltartan Museum. Coach from Merrion Square, Dublin. For more details, contact the IGS office, Tel. 01-6767053, email: info@igs.ie

JUNE 27

IRISH SEED SAVERS ASSOCIATION - POTATO DAY. Tom Maher, the director of the Teagasc potato advisory programme will be giving two talks at 11am and 2pm, followed by garden tours focussing on the potato crops. There will be tastings of the first early varieties grown at ISSA. Content will include: traditional potato varieties - their origin, introduction to Ireland and their role in the great famine; the origin of the blight fungus and the efforts to find a cure after the famine; the arrival of bluestone and modern sprays; and planting traditional varieties in your garden and reaping the rewards. Numbers limited to 20 people per talk. Please call the ISSA on 061-921 866 and book a place. €10 per person. www.irishseedsavers.ie

JUNE 28-JULY 4

IRISH GEORGIAN SOCIETY - TOUR TO NORMANDY Based in Dieppe, the Society will visit a cross section of the historic houses and gardens of Normandy, including some privately owned properties. For more details, contact the IGS office, Tel. 01-6767053, email: info@igs.ie

JULY

JULY 3

IRISH WHALE AND DOLPHIN GROUP - ISCOPE, cetacean workshop, Scatterry Island Centre, Kilrush, Co Clare. Full-day, covering whale watching field skills, recording and Identification. Contact Simon Berrow, Tel. 086-8545450, email: simon.berrow@iwdg.ie

JULY 4

IRISH SEED SAVERS ASSOCIATION - Garden and orchard guided tours will take place at ISSA'S Capparoo site at 2pm and 3.30 pm on July 4th, August 1st, September 5th, and October 3rd. To book please call the ISSA, Tel. 061 921866. Cost €5. www.irishseedsavers.ie

JULY 10

IRISH GEORGIAN SOCIETY - DAY TOUR TO CASHEL, visiting Cashel Cathedral and Bolton Library, Castle Leake and the gardens of Camas Park and Cashel Palace. Coach from Merrion Square, Dublin. For more details, contact the IGS office, Tel. 01-6767053, email: info@igs.ie

JULY 16-18

IRISH WHALE AND DOLPHIN GROUP - WEEKEND WHALE WATCHING COURSE on Cape Clear Island, Co Cork. Contact Pádraig Whooley, Tel. 023-31911, email: padraig.whooley@iwdg.ie

JULY 31

IRISH SEED SAVERS ASSOCIATION VOLUNTEER WORK DAYS provide an opportunity for members to learn about the methods used at ISSA. Compost turning. An opportunity to learn how to make compost using biodynamic preparations. 5/6 people per day. (If anyone is interested in volunteering on a week day on a regular basis, we'll be delighted to hear from you.) To book please call the ISSA, Tel. 061 921866. www.irishseedsavers.ie

AUGUST

AUGUST 1

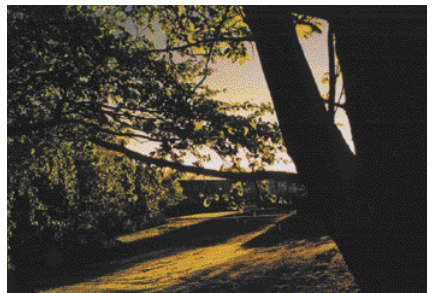
WHALE WATCH IRELAND 2004 - NATIONAL WHALE WATCH DAY. Guided watches on 10 headlands across the four provinces. Full details of locations and local contacts are available on Irish Whale and Dolphin Group website, www.iwdg.ie

AUGUST 7

IRISH SEED SAVERS ASSOCIATION TRAINING COURSE - WILLOW WEAVING Trainer Peter Sheahan will cover all the basic skills and each participant will make a small basket. Maximum course size: 8. Cost €70 including materials. Location: Seed Saver premises, Capparoo, Scariff, Co. Clare. 10am-4.30pm. To book please call the ISSA, Tel. 061 921866. www.irishseedsavers.ie

AUGUST 13-15

IRISH WHALE AND DOLPHIN GROUP - WEEKEND WHALE WATCHING COURSE on Cape Clear Island, Co Cork. Contact Pádraig Whooley, Tel. 023-31911, email: padraig.whooley@iwdg.ie



© Shirley Green

AUGUST 21

IRISH SEED SAVERS ASSOCIATION TRAINING COURSE - CREATING AN ORCHARD An introductory course covering siting an orchard, choosing the best varieties for growing conditions, planting trees, disease/pest prevention, pruning and general maintenance. Tour of Seed Savers orchards. Maximum course size: 15. Cost €60. Location: Seed Saver premises, Capparoo, Scariff, Co. Clare. 10am-4.30pm. To book please call the ISSA, Tel. 061 921866. www.irishseedsavers.ie

AUGUST 22-27

SEABIRDS AND MIGRATION - A Birdwatch Ireland course at Cape Clear, by Dick Coombes. August is a stunning time on Cape with the opportunity to witness some of the huge migratory movements of seabirds - Manx Shearwaters, Storm Petrels, Fulmars, Kittiwakes, Gannets, and auks - off our

Notice Board

south-western seaboard. The course will include a variety of topics ranging from identification techniques for birds in the hand and in flight, to survey and counting methodologies, the work of the observatory, and the effect of weather on birds and migration. Fee €195.

For more details see www.birdwatchireland.ie, email: info@birdwatchireland.org or Tel. 01-2819878

AUGUST 23-27

IRISH PEATLAND CONSERVATION COUNCIL BOG WEEK Course for Primary School Teachers. Bog of Allen Nature Centre, Lullymore, Rathangan, Co Kildare. Includes peatland ecology, cutaway bogs, composting, and wildlife gardening. Contact Catherine O'Connell, Tel. 045-860133. www.ipcc.ie

AUGUST 28

IRISH SEED SAVERS ASSOCIATION TRAINING COURSE - RUSH WEAVING Trainer Marian White will cover basic skills including harvesting and preparation, and each participant will make a small article of their choice. Maximum course size: 8 Cost €70 including materials. Location: Seed Saver premises, Capparoo, Scariff, Co. Clare. 10am-4.30pm. To book please call the ISSA, Tel. 061 921866. www.irishseedsavers.ie

SEPTEMBER

SEPTEMBER 3-20

EXHIBITION ON 'ATLAS OF THE IRISH RURAL LANDSCAPE' - Arts Centre, Mullingar and Athlone Castle. For more details, contact Westmeath Heritage Officer, Bernie Guest, Tel. 044-32077, email: bguest@westmeathcoco.ie

SEPTEMBER 5-12 HERITAGE WEEK



SEPTEMBER 5-12

IRISH PEATLAND CONSERVATION COUNCIL HERITAGE WEEK EVENTS: Bog Walk at Fenor Bog, Co Waterford. Contact Rita Byrne, Tel. 051-381978. Workcamp at the Bog of Allen Nature Centre, Lullymore, Rathangan, Co Kildare, 11am to 4pm. Help to plant up a new exhibition on carnivorous plants. Contact Mary Mulvey, Tel. 045-860133. www.ipcc.ie

SEPTEMBER 5

LAKESHORE NATURE RAMBLE with Con Breen, Botanist. Liliput Lough Ennell, Co Westmeath, 2.30pm. For more details, contact Westmeath Heritage Officer, Bernie Guest, Tel. 044-32077, email: bguest@westmeathcoco.ie

SEPTEMBER 6-17

LAUNCH OF OIDHREACHT EXHIBITION.

A schools heritage project entitled Oidhreacht is underway, as part of the Galway County Heritage

Plan 2004-2008. Over 20 primary schools throughout the county are involved in the project. The students receive training, lectures, workshops and fieldtrips on their chosen heritage topic, and produce DVDs using modern media technology. An exhibition of this work, including DVDs, will be on display in Áras an Chontae, Prospect Hill, Galway from the 6th-17th. For more information, contact Galway's Heritage Officer, Marie Mannion, Tel. 091-509198, email: mmannion@galwaycoco.ie

SEPTEMBER 8-11

IRELAND'S NATIVE WOODLAND CONFERENCE Venue: Galway Mayo Institute of Technology, Galway City. Contact Cara Doyle, Project Coordinator at Woodlands of Ireland, Tel. 01-2849329, email: woodsofireland@iol.ie

SEPTEMBER 8-16

GEOLOGICAL EXHIBITION in Áras an Chontae, Prospect Hill, Galway. For more information, contact Galway's Heritage Officer, Marie Mannion, Tel. 091-509198, email: mmannion@galwaycoco.ie

SEPTEMBER 8

GEOLOGY LECTURE AND INFORMATION EVENING 'Understanding and appreciating the geological heritage of Connemara: Galway County Heritage Plan Initiative'. Venue: Peacock's Hotel, Maam Cross, Co Galway. Admission is free. For more information, contact Galway's Heritage Officer, Marie Mannion, Tel. 091-509198, email: mmannion@galwaycoco.ie

SEPTEMBER 9

GALWAY COUNTY HERITAGE AWARDS. Venue to be confirmed. For details, contact Galway's Heritage Officer, Marie Mannion, Tel. 091-509198, email: mmannion@galwaycoco.ie

SEPTEMBER 9

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS IN MULLINGAR, Lecture by Ronan Swan, Project Archaeologist, Westmeath Co Council. Arts Centre, Mullingar 7.30 pm. For more details, contact Westmeath Heritage Officer, Bernie Guest, Tel. 044-32077, email: bguest@westmeathcoco.ie

SEPTEMBER 10-12

IRISH WHALE AND DOLPHIN GROUP - WEEKEND WHALE WATCHING COURSE on Cape Clear Island, Co Cork. Contact Pádraig Whooley, Tel. 023-31911, email: padraig.whooley@iwdg.ie

SEPTEMBER 12

CRANN is an NGO founded in 1986 to increase the broadleaf tree cover in Ireland and to promote/develop Irish broadleaf resources. Crann in conjunction with Birdwatch Ireland (Tipperary Branch) are having a Tree Walk in Birr Castle at 2.30pm. For more information contact Kate at Crann, 0509-51718 or email janecoman@eircom.net, www.crann.ie

SEPTEMBER 18

IRISH SEED SAVERS ASSOCIATION TRAINING COURSE - HOW TO SAVE SEEDS Introduction to seed saving techniques that can be used in your own garden. Course includes basic botanical theory, assessing the optimum conditions for harvesting, and an introduction to breeding and improving your own vegetable strains. Maximum course size: 15. Cost €60. Location: Seed Saver premises,

es, Capparoo, Scariff, Co. Clare. 10am-4.30pm. To book please call the ISSA, Tel. 061 921866. www.irishseedsavers.ie

SEPTEMBER 18/25

IRISH PEATLAND CONSERVATION COUNCIL EDUCATIONAL COURSE ON BOGS for teachers at the Wicklow Mountains National Park, working out of Glendalough. Field trip and ecology studies on blanket bog. 10am to 3.30pm. Contact Catherine O'Connell, Tel. 045-860133. www.ipcc.ie

SEPTEMBER 24-26

IRISH WHALE AND DOLPHIN GROUP - 'WHALE CONFERENCE', Celtic Ross Hotel, Rosscarbery, Co Cork. Booking and enquiries to Frances Bermingham, Tel. 087-2388433, email: frances.bermingham@iwdg.ie

OCTOBER

OCTOBER 2-10

IRISH PEATLAND CONSERVATION COUNCIL - NATIONAL COMPOSTING WEEK IPCC will be running a series of DIY composting workshops around the country. For details, contact Caroline Hurley, Tel 045-860133. www.ipcc.ie



OCTOBER 9

IRISH SEED SAVERS ASSOCIATION TRAINING COURSE - ORGANIC GARDENING A series of three workshops divulging the secrets of growing healthy vegetables, fruit and herbs. All workshops will include theory and practical work, slide shows, discussions and question/answer sessions. Day 1: October 9th - Planning the garden; soil fertility and care; ground preparation and composting. Day 2: November 6th - What to grow; rotations; propagation; Planting out and plant care. Day 3: November 27th - Pest and disease control; harvesting; storage; seed saving. Maximum course size: 15. Cost €60 per day or €150 for full course. To book please call the ISSA, Tel. 061 921866. www.irishseedsavers.ie

OCTOBER 17-25

IRISH GEORGIAN SOCIETY - TOUR TO VIRGINIA, including colonial plantation, Georgian, and Georgian revival houses in Virginia. Arriving in Dulles Airport and spending four nights in Charlottesville and four nights in Richmond. For full details, contact the IGS office, Tel. 01-6767053, email: info@igs.ie

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GET INVOLVED - CONSERVATION VOLUNTEERS IRELAND

Conservation Volunteers Ireland, a voluntary environmental organisation based at Rathfarnham Castle, invites volunteers for practical projects to protect and enhance our natural and cultural environment. Volunteers enjoy open-air activity in congenial company, as well as benefiting our environmental heritage. For example, we are currently engaged, in partnership with Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, in a three-year woodland management project in Marlay Park. The project involves invasive species removal, tree planting, seed collection, wildflower and bulb planting, and the creation of a new woodland. CVI invites individuals and community groups to become involved in this exciting project in beautiful surroundings. Tools and guidance is provided. At various times throughout the year we also organise Conservation Holidays around the country. CVI also runs practical and informative courses, such as Drystone Walling, Hedgelaying, Tree Identification and Planting, Gardening for Birds, etc. If interested, please contact CVI on Tel. 01-495 2878 or see www.cvi.ie

GROUNDWORK CONSERVATION CAMPS

If you have a taste for adventure, are in good health and are over 18 years of age, then a week-long Groundwork 'holiday' is just the thing for you. Groundwork Conservation Workcamps will run for 12 weeks in Killarney National Park, starting on June 13th and finishing on September 5th. Why not spend a week in one of Ireland's national parks, helping to conserve one of Ireland's few remaining wild oak forests by removing invasive *Rhododendron* which is destroying the woods. Meet new people from many different countries who share your concern for the environment. One week costs €30, two weeks €45 (food and accommodation included). For more information, see www.groundwork.ie, email: rhodo@eircom.net, or call Barbara on 01-6604530

2004 LIZARD SURVEY OF IRELAND

In March, 2004, the Irish Wildlife Trust launched a nationwide survey of Ireland's only native lizard, *Lacerta vivipara*, the viviparous or common lizard. Interested in helping out? Contact the IWT office, Tel. 01-6604530, or email the Project Coordinator directly at billy@iwt.ie. The IWT gratefully acknowledges the assistance of the Heritage Council with the 2004 Lizard Survey of Ireland.

SPECIAL AREA OF CONSERVATION-WATCH

The Irish Wildlife Trust are looking for volunteers who are interested in getting to know more about their local SACs. The network of SAC WATCH volunteers will help the IWT to create local awareness about wildlife sites. Please get involved. This is a great opportunity to discover the biodiversity in your area while at the same time helping to ensure its future. For more information, Tel. 01-6604530, email: enquiries@iwt.ie

CONSERVING IRELAND'S BATS

The bat workers of Ireland are uniting! A new umbrella organisation has been launched as a voice for the growing number of Irish bat groups. Local bat groups are run by enthusiasts who wish to study their local bats and highlight their importance. They offer public lectures and provide guided bat walks so locals can learn more about 'their' bats. Such an appreciation of the local bat fauna can help to protect known roosts from disturbance.

Bat Conservation Ireland (BCI) will act as an umbrella body to disseminate information to regional groups, respond to public enquiries through its Bat Helpline, produce information resources, and organise events and surveys. A membership base will be organised to give weight to the threats to bats; to emphasise the heritage value of these animals; to lobby government for changes or additions to the wildlife laws; to address bat conservation issues in relation to proposed developments; and to ensure bats and their needs are considered in the early stages of planning. A summer Bat Officer is to be employed to respond to public enquiries and to develop local bat groups.

The Heritage Council has provided funding for BCI to build a national database which will collate information on bat roosts and distribution. BCI is hoping to recruit new volunteers and arm them with bat detectors. Interested individuals can attend Bat Detector Workshops and take part in this summer's National Car Bat Transect Survey, which was successfully piloted last year and is funded by the Heritage Council and the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

To become a member or to learn more about BCI, see www.batconservationireland.org



The lesser horseshoe bat, *Rhinolophus hipposideros*. Two of the ten species found in Ireland are of international importance: the lesser horseshoe bat and Leisler's bat. Ireland has ratified two European conventions on bat protection. BCI plans to act as a watchdog to ensure that government lives up to their responsibilities. Copyright Pat Falvey



An Irish Wildlife Trust 25th Anniversary Event

2004 is the 25th anniversary of the Irish Wildlife Trust, and the Trust is marking the occasion with a three-day celebration of Irish wildlife to be held from September 24th to 26th at Castle Durrow, Durrow, Co. Laois.

The Conference programme includes presentations and workshops that highlight the latest research and status of the Irish fauna – mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and invertebrates – and flora, including individual species, legislation, habitats, conservation, etc. The hands-on workshops will cover practical wildlife work such as 'identification of bats in the hand', 'tracks and signs of Irish mammals', surveying for pine marten, wildlife photography, etc. Speakers from many fields are included in the line-up and the event is open to all interested in the welfare of the wild animals and plants that inhabit this island in the 21st Century. The event will be an opportunity for like-minded people – from students and academics to consultants and amateur naturalists – to mix and discuss the Irish countryside and its wild inhabitants. All are welcome.

Booking forms and conference programme are available on the IWT website: www.iwt.ie and from the IWT office at Garden Level, 21 Northumberland Road, Dublin 4, Tel. 01-6604530, or from the Conference Organiser at Spring Lane, Carrigagulla, Ballinagree, Macroom, Co. Cork.

Booking forms must be returned on or before July 31st 2004

HERITAGE COUNCIL STAFF

Michael Starrett
Chief Executive

Anne Barcoe
P.A. to Chief Executive and Chairperson

Ian Doyle
Archaeologist

Mary Hanna
Architect

Dr Liam Lysaght
Ecologist

Beatrice Kelly
Inland Waterways/Marine Officer

Fionnuala Lynch
Grants Administrator

Martina Malone
Secretarial Support

Linda O'Brien
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Stephen Rhys-Thomas
Planning Officer

Amanda Ryan
Secretarial Support

Liam Scott
Human Resources Manager

Isabell Smyth
Communications and Education Officer

Position Vacant
Museums and Archives Officer

Heritage Council staff can be contacted at: **The Heritage Council**,
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Tel. 056-7770777 Fax. 056-7770788
Email: mail@heritagecouncil.ie
www.heritagecouncil.ie

What is Heritage?

Under the National Heritage Act (1995), 'heritage' is defined as including the following areas:

- Monuments
- Archaeological Objects
- Heritage Objects
- Architectural heritage
- Flora and Fauna
- Wildlife Habitats - Landscapes
- Seascapes and Wrecks - Geology
- Heritage Gardens and Parks
- Inland Waterways

LOCAL AUTHORITY HERITAGE OFFICERS

Carlow: Lorcan Scott
Carlow County Council
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Tel. 059-9136201 /
059-9170300
Fax. 059-9141503 email:
heritageofficer@carlowcoco.ie

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Clare: Congella McGuire
Clare County Council
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Dublin City Council
Planning & Development
Department
Block 4 Floor 3
Civic Offices, Wood Quay
Dublin 8
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01-6723800
Fax. 01-6777780 email:
donncha.odulaing@dublincity.ie

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Donegal County Council
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Co Donegal
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Dun Laoghaire Rathdown: Tim Carey
Dun Laoghaire Rathdown
County Council
County Hall, Dun Laoghaire
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Galway County: Marie Mannion
Galway County Council
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Kildare: Bridget Loughlin
Kildare County Council
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Laois County Council

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Limerick: Tom O'Neill
Limerick County Council
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Limerick
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Mayo County Council
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Meath: Loretto Guinan
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North Tipperary: Siobhan Geraghty
North Tipperary County
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Offaly County Council
Courthouse
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South Tipperary: Brendan McSherry
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Clonmel, Co Tipperary
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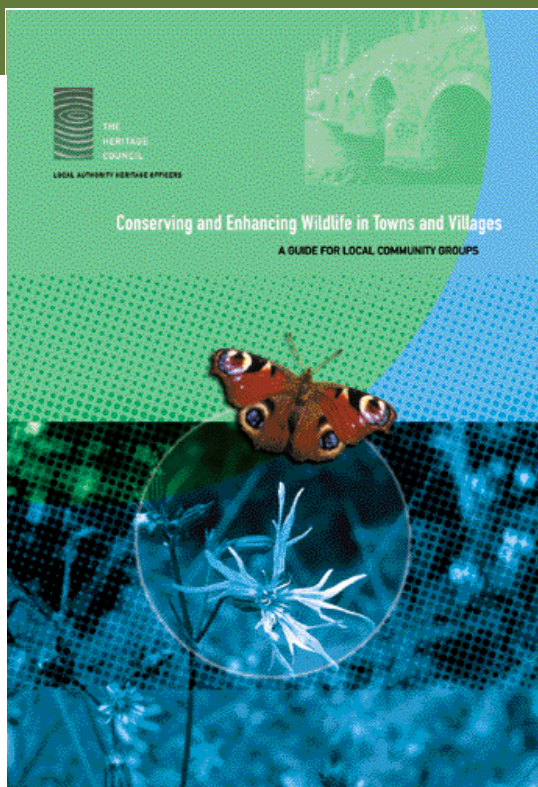
Waterford: Dominic Berridge
Waterford County Council
Civic Offices, Dungarvan
Co Waterford
Tel. 058-22021 /
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dberridge@waterfordcoco.ie

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Tel. 0404-20100
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Westmeath: Bernie Guest
Westmeath County Council
County Buildings, Mullingar
Co Westmeath
Tel. 044-32077 / 32108
email: bguest@westmeathcoco.ie

Longford: (vacant)
Longford County Council
Áras an Chontae
Great Water Street, Longford
Co Longford
Tel. 044-32000
Fax. 044-35231

Recent Heritage Council Publications



Conserving and Enhancing Wildlife in Towns and Villages

A Guide for Local Community Groups

Published by The Heritage Council and Local Authority Heritage Officers.

This guide encourages communities to be more aware of wildlife in built-up areas and provides advice on wise management of common habitats; best conservation practice; and provides information on choosing native trees and shrubs.

Urban areas can support a surprisingly wide range of wildlife habitats and species of conservation interest. Birds nest in gardens or under the eaves of buildings. Hedgerows support mammals, insects, and wildflowers. Bats roost in buildings, trees, and under old bridges. Fungi, lichens, and mosses grow on both wood and stone, while our canals support otters, frogs, newts, insects, waterfowl, and fish. Our natural heritage is not confined to rural areas, it just may be hidden or exist on the periphery of our towns and villages.

Copies are available at www.heritagecouncil.ie

The Care of Stained Glass

The Care of Stained Glass is a guide to the care of stained glass. The booklet features many descriptive photographs, comprehensive text, full page photographs and typography reflective of the time.

Ireland has a rich legacy of stained glass. Fine examples of the art can be found in public and private buildings across the country, but mainly in our churches. The work of some of the finest European, English and Irish artists graces great cathedrals, historic buildings, and humble churches.

This booklet is intended as a guide for the custodians of these treasures, to assist them in their care and conservation.

