

PPN
Workshop
17 Oct 2025

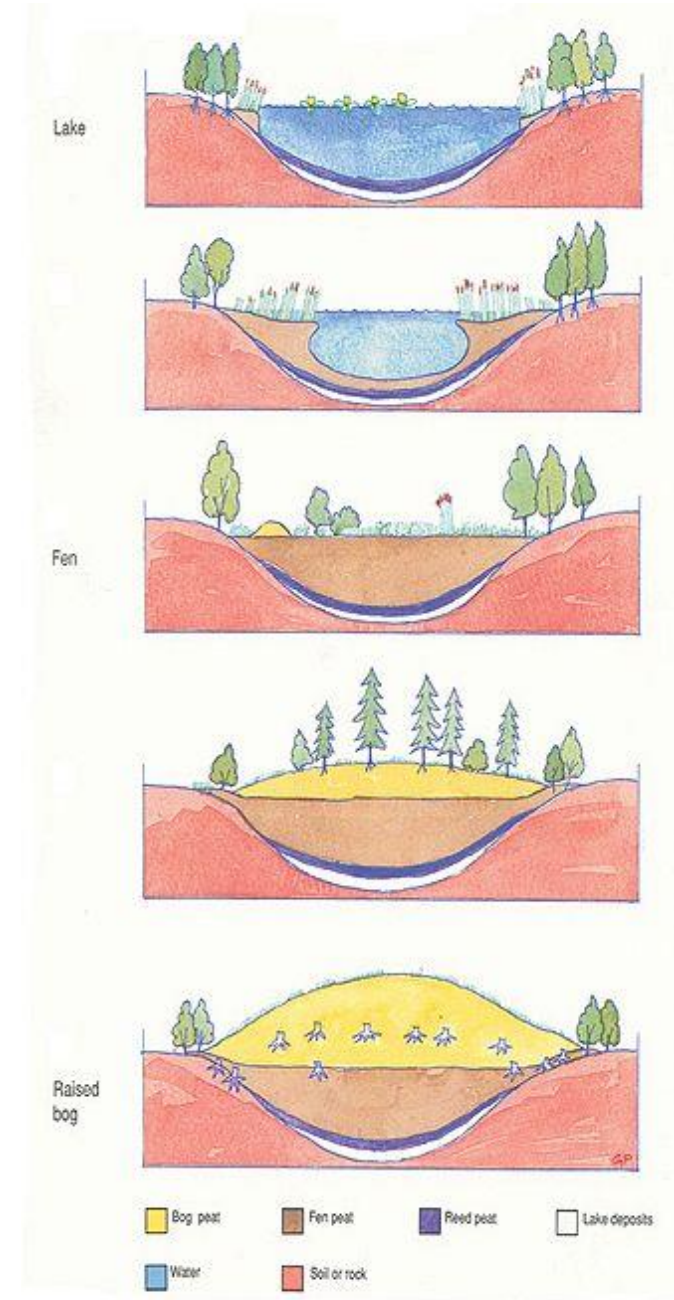
Gnáthóga Nádúrtha Natural Habitats Project

Introduction
and workshop

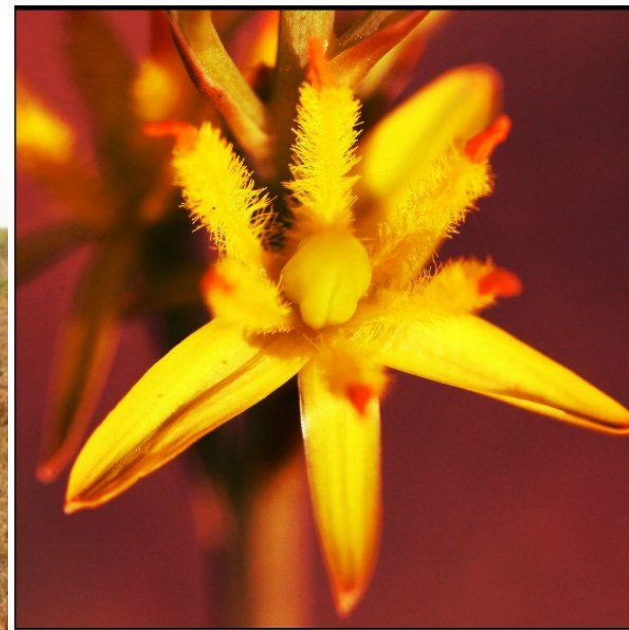


What is a bog?

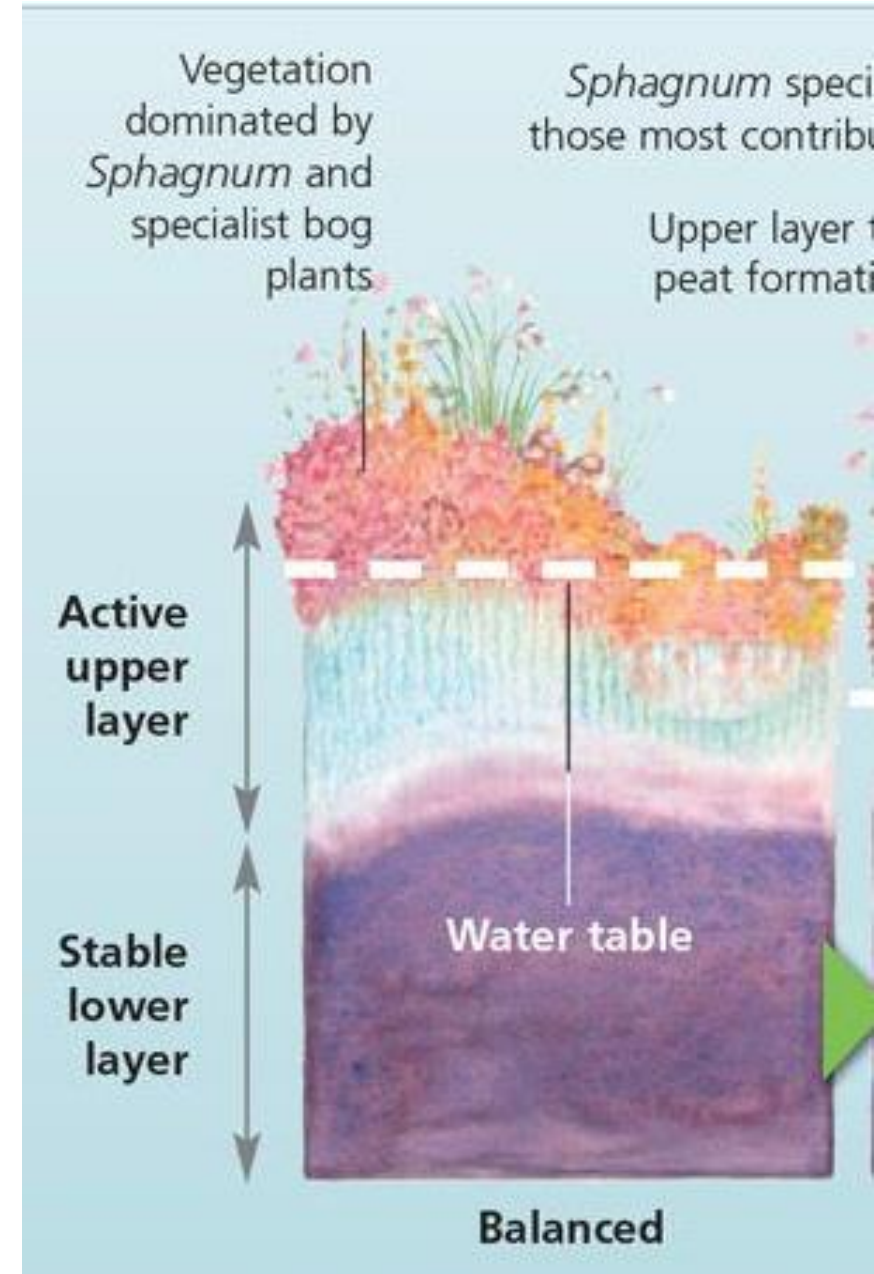
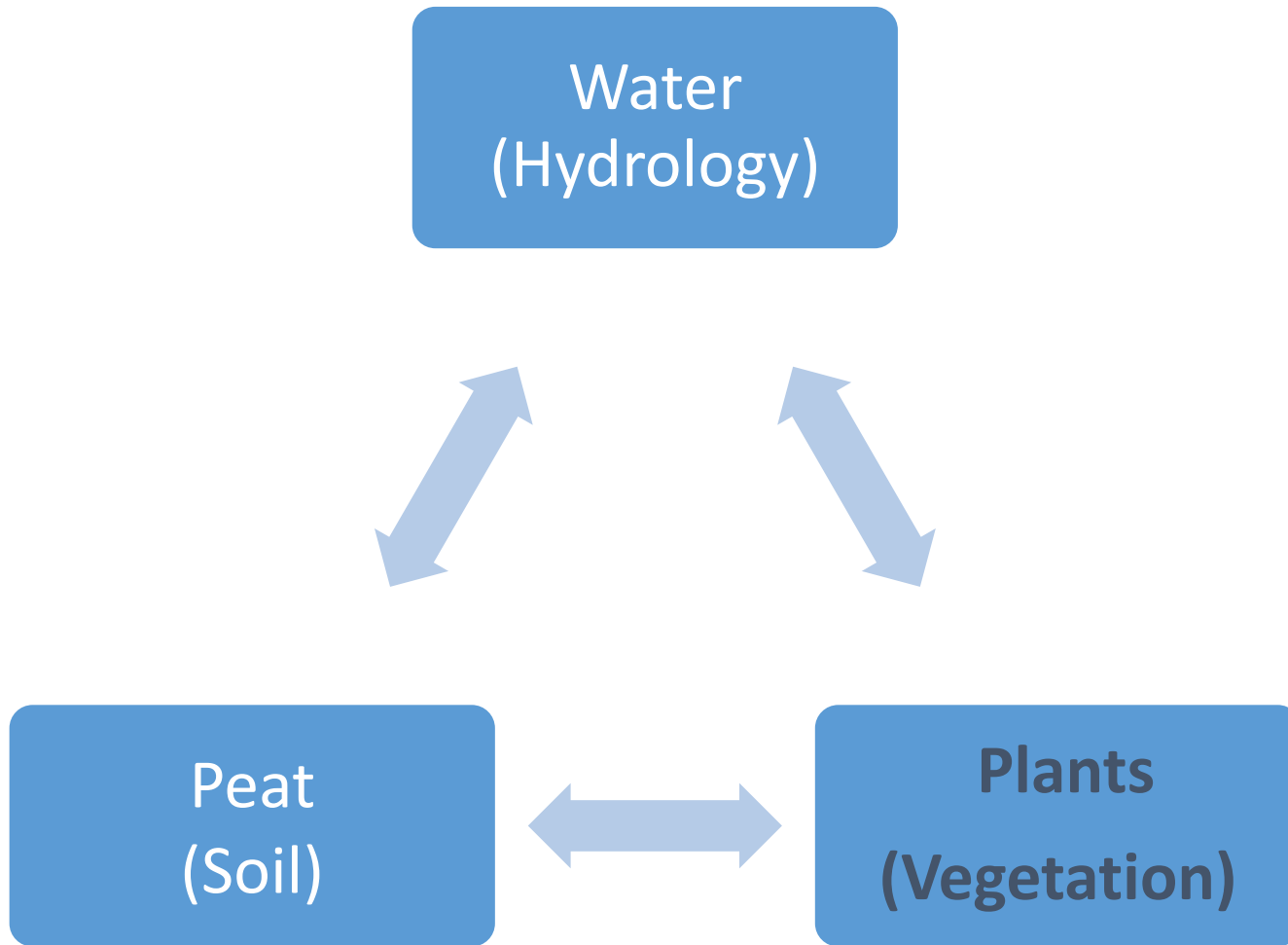
- A **wetland habitat** that accumulates peat
- **Peat** is partially decayed plants, mostly Sphagnum mosses.
- Bogs exist when plants don't decompose due to waterlogged conditions and acidity
- **Raised bogs** are dome-shaped masses of peat in former lake basins
- Blanket bogs form in mountainous areas with high rainfall



Bog biodiversity is not always visible



Features of healthy peatlands in balance



Introduction to artists, project and team

3 peatland sites – Drummin, Girley and Ballydermot/Cluain Rúisc Bogs
3 artists – Monica de Bath, Jules Michael, Kate Flood
3 arts services – Carlow, Kildare and Meath County Council Arts Offices
3 mentors – The Bog itself, Dr. Cathy Fitzgerald, Dr. Anita McKeown
3 objects – Ganger's Hut, Butter Firkin, Bog Cabinet of Curiosities

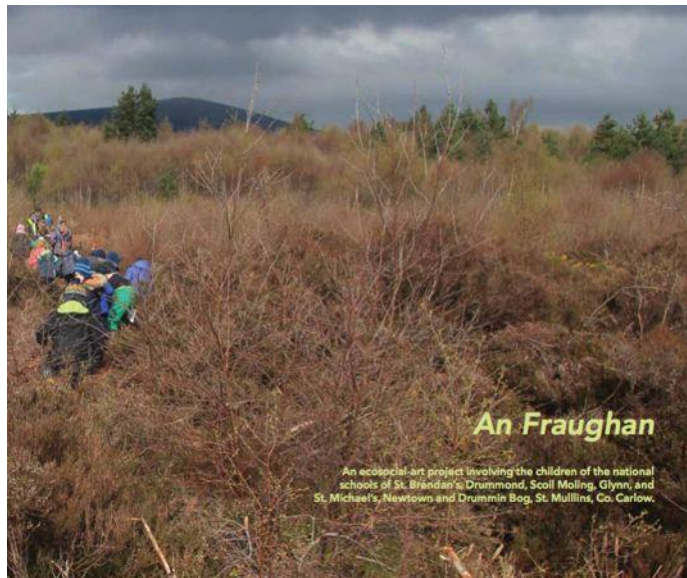


Jules Michael

Drummin Bog collaborations - overview

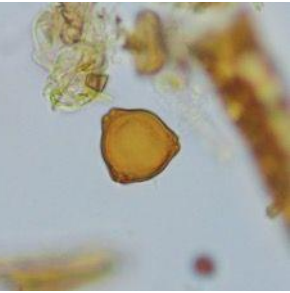


An Fraughan (2019 – 2020)



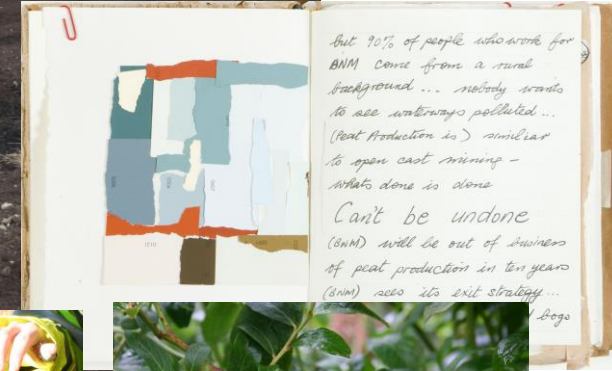
An Fraughan

An ecological art project involving the children of the national schools of St. Brendan's Drummond, Scoll Molling, Glynn, and St. Michael's, Newtown and Drummin Bog, St. Mullins, Co. Carlow.



The Banner Project (2020 -2021)





Monica De Bath



Kate Flood



An evolving relationship with Girley Bog

An 'Greallach', a marshy or muddy place



walking



2011-2013

I established an ecotourism business providing educational workshops and guided walks at peatland habitats. I worked with Causey Farm on their Ecology Studies programme and ran Foraging workshops.

2016-2018

I created a blog to celebrate the bogs and peatlands of Ireland, through the lens of my relationship with Girley Bog. www.abogslife.com. Secretary of the Girley Bog Meitheal.

2022

My involvement with the Gnáthoga Nádurtha project has deepened my relationship with the bog and with other artists working with their local bog, providing me with opportunities to understand and communicate through artistic and cultural practices of care and collaboration.

2009

remembering

restoring

reimagining

2023

My relationship with Girley Bog and its inhabitants continues to develop through time.

exploring



blogging

guiding

collaborating

2010

My early interest in Girley Bog was as a walker and I gradually become more and more interested in the plants and ecology of the bog. Out of this knowledge, I wanted to be more active in protecting the bog.

2013-2015

I researched the social and cultural history of Girley Bog Natural Heritage Area through historic maps, documents and oral history interviews with local people. Continued to organise walks, workshops and community activities at Girley Bog.

2018-2022

I started my doctoral studies examining the social and cultural values of bogs with Girley Bog as one of my case studies. This involved a community mapping of the bog to identify the values held by local people who visit and care for the bog.

responding



seeking

Plants



Surveys



Historic Maps



Community Mapping



Bog Cabinet



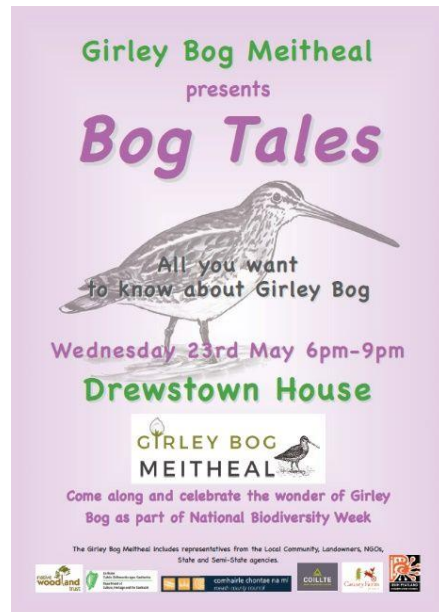
Events & educational activities with partners at Girley Bog



Peat-free
workshop
with IPCC



Girley Bog oral history & community evenings



Birdwatch Ireland Meath outing



Irish Woodcock Project survey



IPCC Pond dipping at Bioblitz



Mammal workshop, Waterford IT



Drummin Bog Project group visit



Girley Bog History talks



Dr. Anita McKeown - Creative Placemaking and Community Mapping Process

PermaCultural resilience (pCr) critical praxis (McKeown, 2015)



ASU | Gnáthóga Nádúrtha pCr Interim report

Future Focus21c

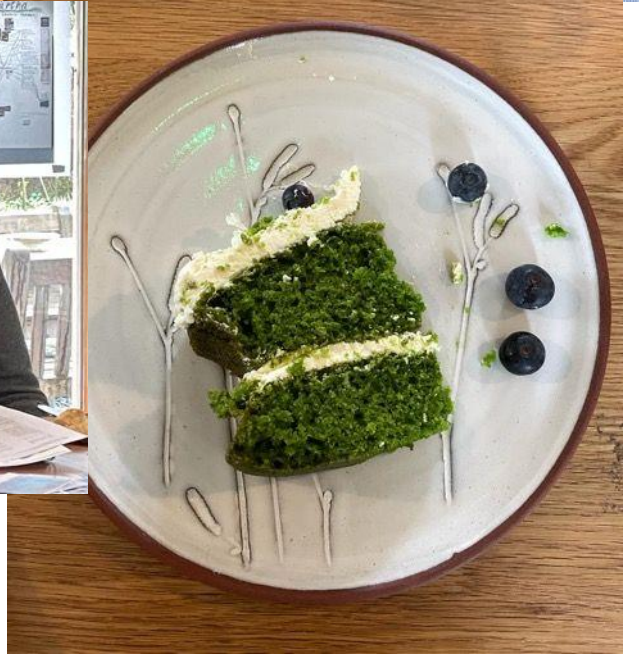
Tooling up education for the 21c

For a landscape to disappear
it must first disappear
in the imagination

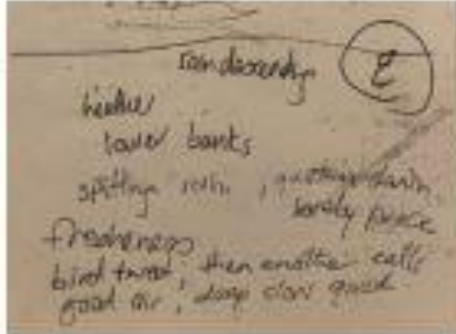
Linear thinking $\rightarrow$ way things
are taught



Dr. Cathy Fitzgerald - Ecoliteracy training for Gnáthóga Nádúrtha

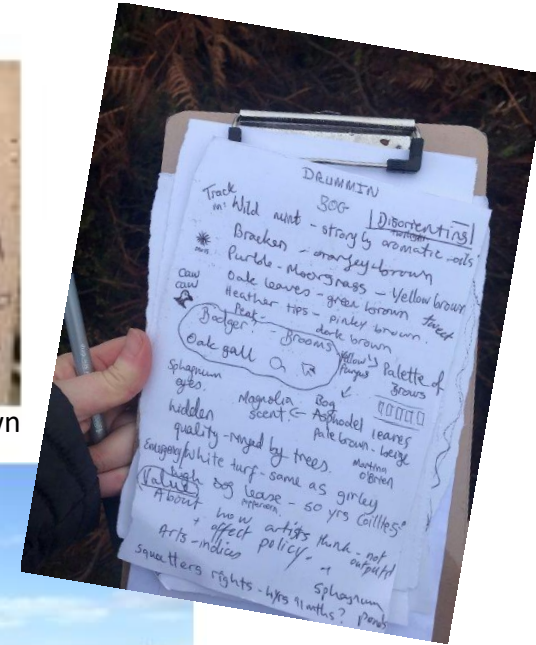


Team Site Visits – Girley, Drummin, Ballydermot Bogs



Observational Mapping, Drummin Bog, 2023

Image: Anita McKeown



Studio visits

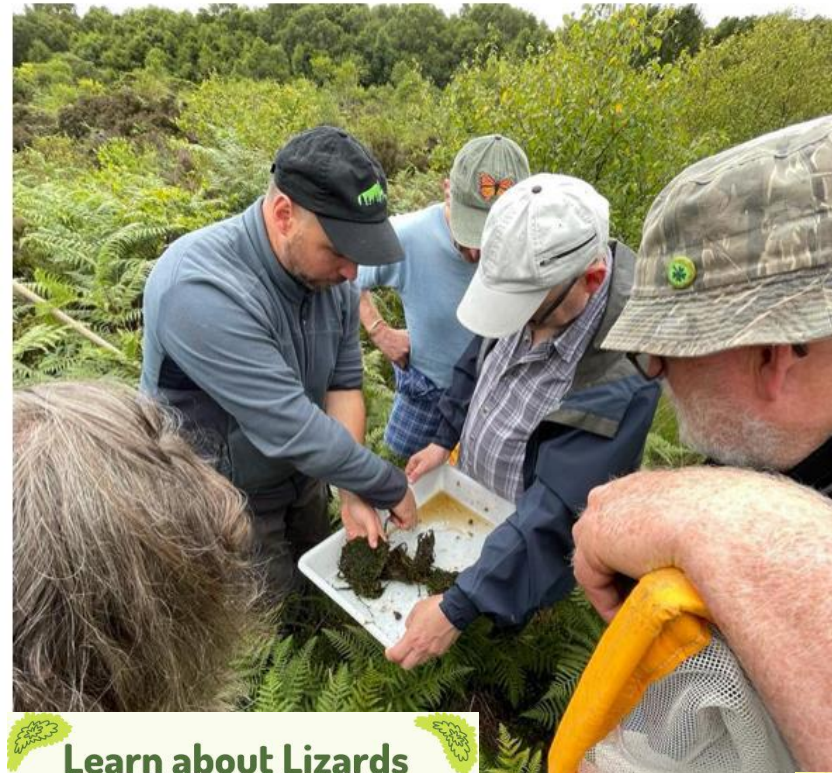


The collage consists of three distinct images. The top image is a landscape photograph of a large, rounded hill under a dramatic, cloudy sky. The bottom left image shows a woman with glasses and a blue sweater looking down at a table. The bottom right image is a close-up of a dark, textured, branching object, possibly a sculpture or a piece of art.



Lizard and Mini-beasts workshops across the 3 sites with Rob Gandola, Irish Herpetological Society

NPWS Grants for Small
Recording Projects 2023



Learn about Lizards
AND REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS OF GIRLEY BOG

23 JULY 2023
2 PM

Join us for a slow walk around Girley Bog to learn about these fascinating creatures with Rob Gandola, Herpetological Society of Ireland. We will do some creative exercises and graphic note taking so please bring a notebook & pencil. This project is funded by the NPWS Grant for Small Recording Projects 2023. Thanks also to Coillte and artists from the Gnáthóg Nadurtha project.

Meet at 2pm at **Drewstown/Coillte Car Park**, Girley Bog. Entrance from R154.



Monica - Rathangan Event at 'The Old Schoolhouse





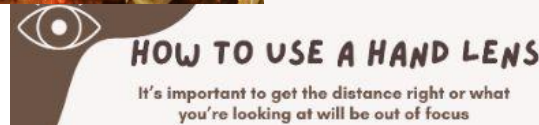
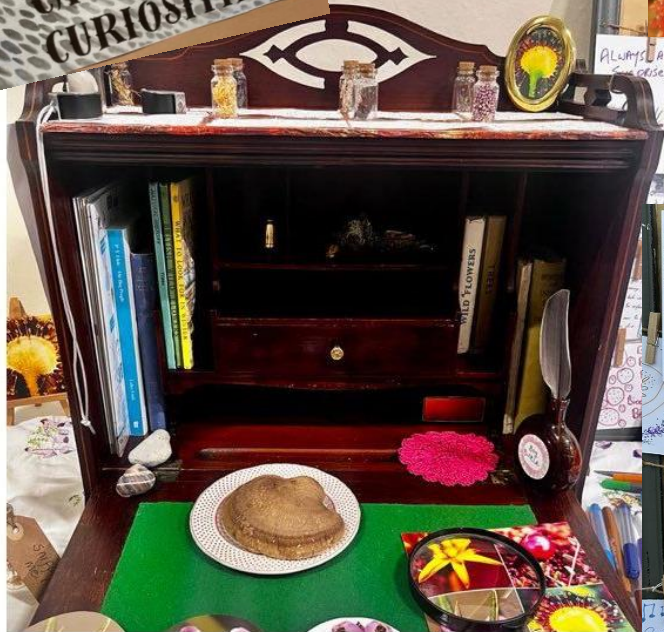
Tales and Tastes of the Bog Drummond Hall Community event



Community Event - Kells Heritage Centre, Meath



come and explore
**THE BOG
CABINET OF
CURIOSITIES**



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ka1jabPdcTE>

Building new relationships

Extending existing partnerships

County Councils - Arts Officers, Heritage Officers, Biodiversity and Climate Action Officers, PPN and other Local Authority officers

Community Wetlands Forum

Herpetological Society of Ireland (HSI)

RE-Peat schools - youth network

National Parks & Wildlife Service

Birdwatch Ireland Meath

Irish Peatland Conservation Council

Girley Bog Meitheal

Coillte

BNM Ecology Team

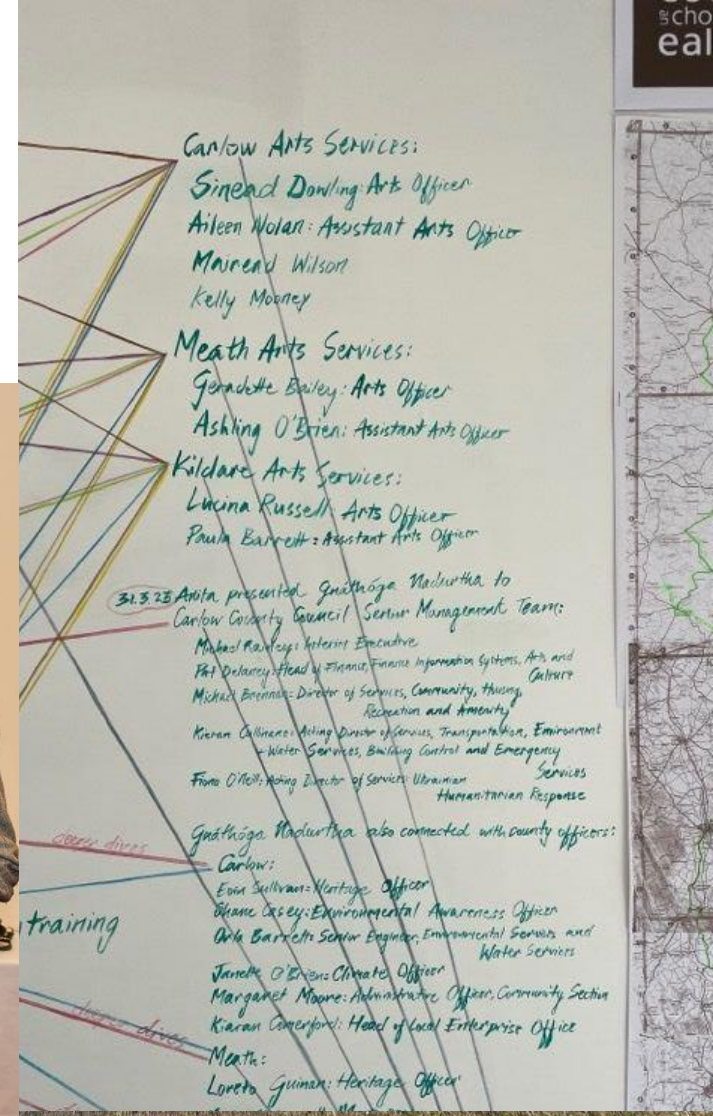
Rathangan Library

Creative Rathangan Meitheal

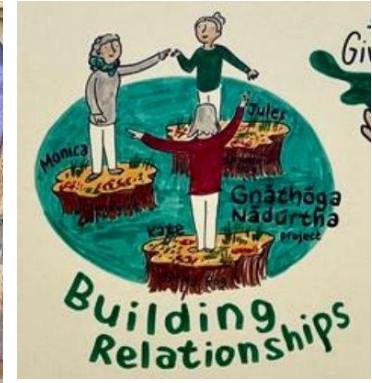
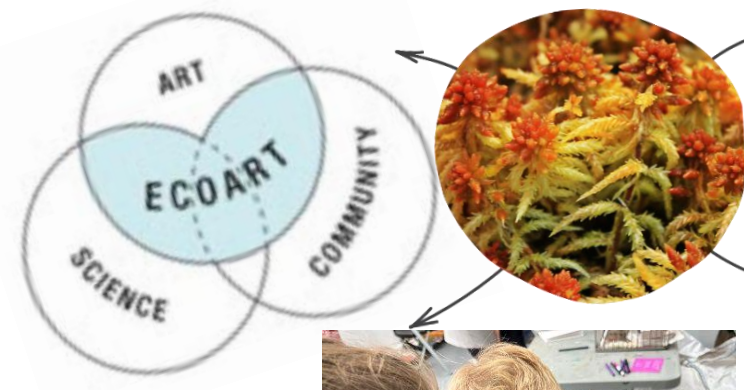
Drummin Bog Project Committee

Farmpeat

UCD Earth Institute



EARTH IMMA
RISING

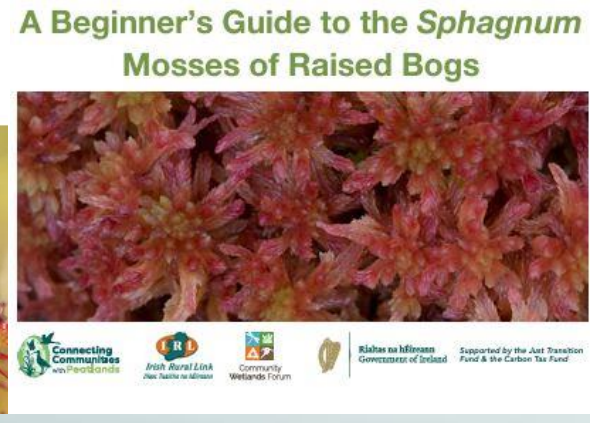


Culture as catalyst – A new peatlands architecture

The Bog Bothy

A shelter & gathering space for deep engagement with the bog that builds on the design language of Ireland's peatlands, exploring the bog as both historical archive & future landscape.





Join us to tackle the invasive Rhododendron plant found in areas around Abbyleix Bog. On the day we will sweep an area along the old railway track to remove and map saplings, smaller plants and bigger clusters.

What to bring: Wellies, old clothes (weather appropriate) & some lunch
Provided: Gloves, tools, tea & biscuits Duration: Up to 4 hours



Peatlands have many different values and types of knowledge



Ecology
Hydrology
Botany
Zoology
Geography
Mapping



Creative arts
Painting
Photography
Literature
Poetry
Music / Sound



History Heritage
Archaeology
Oral history
Turf-cutting
Local knowledge



Citizen Science
Recording biodiversity
Community conservation projects



Nature-based activities
Birdwatching
Hiking
Recreation
Ecotourism



Community action
Peatland advocacy/activism
Peat-free gardening

Many types of knowledge and ways of knowing peatlands

Further information and links

Creative Drummin Website:

<https://drumminbog.com/creative-drummin/>

Earth Institute news and Events: <https://www.ucd.ie/earth/newsevents/news/body,7>

YouTube Podcast with Farmpeat:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ka1jabPdcTE&t=265s>

Cathy Fitzgerald, Haumea Ecovercity

<https://haumea.ie/>

Anita McKeown, FutureFocus21c

<https://www.futurefocus21c.com/>

More information about the artists:

Jules Michael

<https://www.julesmichael.com/>

Monica De Bath

<https://monicadebath.wixsite.com/monicadebath>

[Creative Rathangan Meitheal](#)

Kate Flood

[A Bog's Life Blog](#)



Feature	Condition	Bog Plant	Adaptation
Low growing / slow growing	Exposure	All bog plants	Leaves are small and needle like and plants grow low to the ground to prevent water loss from exposure and drying out
Waxy leaves White hairs Leaves roll in	Exposure	Heathers Cranberry Bog Rosemary	Leaves have a waxy coating to prevent moisture loss during the summer. The leaves roll inwards or have white hairs which help reduce water loss to stop the plant from drying out.
Evergreen	Soil is poor in nutrients	Heathers Bog Rosemary Bog Cranberry	Retain their leaves for more than one season, enabling photosynthesis year round
Insect-eating	Soil is poor in nutrients	Sundew (Round leaved/Oblong leaved) Bladderwort Butterwort	Insectivorous plants can photosynthesise but benefit from the extra nutrients provided by insects
Underground bulbs, stems, and rhizomes	Soil is poor in nutrients	Bog Cotton Bog Asphodel Deer grass Purple Moor grass	The food for the plant is recycled and stored over winter in underground roots, stems or rhizomes
Hummock-forming	Wetness/ Exposure	Hare's Tail Cottongrass Sphagnum sp. Deer grass	These plants form hummocks to create a drier environment and ensure they can get enough oxygen to their roots. Growing together in hummocks also protects the plant from wind and cold.
Air canals		Common Cottongrass	Air canals allow oxygen to pass from the stems to the roots which can be buried 60cm in the peat, thus enabling the plant to 'snorkel'
Mycorrhiza	Acidity	Heather	Heather plants have a mesh of fungal threads called mycorrhiza which help the plant absorb nutrients from the peat