



**Irish  
Environmental  
Network**

Happy May Day everyone! Lá Bealtaine shona duit!

Below is our May newsletter. As always this newsletter is free to share with your PPN groups in full or in part. If you want to share the full newsletter here is the link: <https://conta.cc/3RdSJif>

This month I'd like to highlight the events happening for National Biodiversity Week. There are hundreds of free events across the country organised by IEN members, Biodiversity Officers, NPWS Rangers and more.

We are also delighted to be hosting this year's **Biodiversity Week launch event with Cork County PPN!** It's going to be an amazing day focusing on community action. Please share the event with anyone you know in the area.

I'd also like to thank Galway County PPN, Clare PPN and Galway City PPN for their work in organising and taking part in last weeks event held in Kinvara; *Rethinking Systems - Growing Local Strength for People and Planet*. We had a great day at the Burren Nature Sanctuary exploring topics like the Wellbeing Economy, using art within communities, Local Food Policy and the Nature Restoration Law, and highlighting how the PPN can be used to collectively take action on issues of concern in the community as well as showcasing how the PPNs can bring people together at events like this one. Thank you to all involved!

Lastly, I am always available to share your news or announcements through this monthly newsletter. If you'd like to receive a reminder for a call for content (sent each month a few days before the newsletter goes out) please let me know and I will add you to a mailing list to receive the call for content. Otherwise, you can email me at any time with items to include in next months newsletter sent on the 1st of each month.

Is mise, le meas,  
Catherine.

(Irish Environmental Network/Environmental Pillar)



Lá Bealtaine shona duit! Happy May Day! It's officially the start of Summer and this week has been glorious for the sun. Long may it last!

This month we are highlighting many, many events. Not only are there amazing events listed below, but from May 15th - 24th it's National Biodiversity Week, meaning hundreds of free events around the country!

Grab a cool refreshing drink and have a browse through this newsletter and also [www.BiodiversityWeek.ie](http://www.BiodiversityWeek.ie) and choose an event to attend. It could be one, it could be five, but definitely take advantage of all of these wonderful free events taking place!

Today is also the first day of the [Biodiversity Photographer of the Year competition](#). No better way to spend the weekend than immersing yourself in nature, so grab your camera or your phone and see what wildlife and landscapes you can find.

I won't keep you in the intro, there's enough to be reading below, including other training, job opportunities and more.

Le meas,  
Catherine

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- Public consultation for the Draft Mayo Biodiversity Action Plan 2026-2031

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- Voluntary External Chairperson of ECO-UNESCO's Education and Training Committee

## Quick Guide to Events

### May

- **2nd @ 10am:** Knitting for Beginners - Leitrim
- **2nd @ 10.30am:** Community Tree Planting Day at Slieve Aughty Centre - Galway
- **2nd @ 8.30pm:** Dusk Chorus: A Guided Woodland Walk - Leitrim
- **2nd - 3rd:** Weekend in the Hills - Festival of Traditional Craft at Slieve Aughty Centre - Galway
- **10th @ 10am:** Living in Balance: Community Actions for Nature - Cork
- **12th @ 10.30am:** The Young Environmentalist Awards: Final Showcase & Awards Ceremony 2026 - Dublin
- **14th @ 7pm:** Seeds of Inspiration: Growing Native Trees from Seed with John McKeon - Monaghan
- **15th - 24th:** National Biodiversity Week
- **19th @ 3.30pm:** Feeding Ourselves Webinar - Securing our Food Sovereignty - Online
- **22nd - 24th:** Irish Forest School Association Annual Gathering 2026 Bookings are now open! - Wicklow
- **29th - 31st:** IWDG Residential Weekend Whale Watching Course - Wet Cork

#### Funding Opportunities

- Sustainability Step-up Fund

#### Job Opportunities

- The IEN is currently hiring for two great roles on the all-island CHANGE project

#### Footer

- Find out more about IEN member groups

#### June

- **3rd @ World Ocean Week Conference - 3rd June 2026 -**  
Cork City Hall

## Community Groups Showcase

**Join those who are making a difference for nature and climate in your county! Find people in your area who share your interests and goals for 2026. Below are just three groups out of hundreds in Ireland.**

Find more on your PPN's website. Go to their 'members' section and sort by 'Environmental Pillar' to see some of the groups in your area.

Already in a group of your own? Find your PPN online (search 'your county' and 'ppn') to join for free and receive free training, information on local events and funding, and the opportunities to affect local policy creation in your County Council.



### OURganic Gardens

*Donegal*

OURganic Gardens is an outdoor educational garden focused on Food, Wellbeing, Biodiversity, Holistic Connections and Community. Using Permaculture Design Principles and Hands-On Learning we have been running onsite workshops since 2016 and off site community garden classes since 2013! We are a profit for purpose business and run workshops and grow food for participants to enjoy -



### The Fenit Coast Conservation (FCC) Group

*Kerry*

The Fenit Coast Conservation (FCC) Group is a grass roots community initiative convened in early 2021. The group was formed to promote stewardship of the



### Ballisodare Fishing Club

*Sligo*

The Ballisodare Fishing Club Board is extremely conscious and concerned about the major decline in salmon numbers returning to our river system over the past decade. In

We also grow organically certified plants and vegetable starter packs for sale at certain times of the year.

[Read more here](#)

Fenit area coastline with emphasis on the Fenit Island tombolo.

[Follow them here](#)

or email [fenitcoastconservation@gmail.com](mailto:fenitcoastconservation@gmail.com)

response the Board's mission is to maximise the number of Atlantic salmon smolts reaching the sea from our river system. Through our strategy plan, we aim to improve the environmental conditions, necessary for enhanced reproduction.

[Read more here](#)

### *IEN Member spotlight*



#### **CELT**

CELT is the Centre for Environmental Living & Training We provide training, education and awareness-raising in traditional and ecological skills. Our ethos is to encourage individuals and communities to live more sustainably.

[More info and get in touch](#)

[See all IEN members here](#)

## **Events**

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### **MAY EVENTS**

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The  
**Organic**  
centre

## Knitting for Beginners

with Eimear O'Neill

May 2nd, 10am  
Leitrim

Discover the joy of knitting and start your creative journey! In this hands-on workshop, you'll learn all the essential skills to make beautiful handmade pieces—from cozy hats to stylish jumpers. Reconnect with the heritage of handcrafting and join generations of knitters who have kept this timeless tradition alive.



What you'll learn: Casting on and binding off, Knit and purl stitches, Increasing and decreasing  
Reading and understanding knitting patterns

No experience needed. All wool and needles are provided (or bring your own if you prefer)  
Please note-Eimear also does a course 'Introduction to hand spinning' later in the year.

[Book now](#)



## Community Tree Planting Day at Slieve Aughty Centre

May 2nd, 10.30am - 3pm  
Galway

Join us for a Community Tree planting day at the Slieve Aughty Centre as part of the ongoing development of our new Nature Restoration, Agroforestry and Biodiversity Demonstration project, devised and managed by Forester Julius Silvan and developed as part of our educational partnership between CELT and the Slieve Aughty Centre.



CELT are delighted to invite you to join us and be a part of our collaborative efforts and share in the amazing ecological and biodiversity restoration that is taking place at this site, building on the site's potential and creating a new community educational space and exciting nature restoration project in the Sliabh Aughties.

Over the years CELT has been offering training and working with experts in the area of regeneration and nature restoration, including professional foresters, master crafts people, ecological specialist and land and water management experts engaged in the restoration of critical wetlands, biodiversity, hedgerows, and agroforestry and we are delighted now to create an exemplary model and center of excellence for ecological restoration and education at the Slieve Aughty Centre.

This project is funded by the IEN, Community Foundation Ireland and DAFM.

### Event Details:

**We start at 10.30 and lunch is provided. Please park down the road past the centre. To register please visit - <https://www.celtnet.org/events/community-tree-planting-day-at-slieve-aughty-centre>**





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## Join Us for the Dusk Chorus: A Guided Woodland Walk

May 2nd, 8.30pm  
Leitrim

Experience the magic of dusk in the woods! Join us for a guided woodland walk led by ecologist Annie Birtwistle. Discover the fascinating sounds and sights of birds as they prepare for the night.



-  **Date:** Saturday, 2nd May
-  **Time:** 8:30 PM – 10:00 PM
-  **Location:** Farnaght Woods - Pin drop for the site: <https://maps.app.goo.gl/RqctWh2Sb6P6xcEXA>
-  **Cost:** Free (donations welcome)

**Reserve your spot**

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## Weekend in the Hills - Festival of Traditional Craft at Slieve Aughty Centre

May 2nd - 3rd, 10am - 5pm  
Galway

A Gathering that Celebrates Community and Culture

Welcome to our Weekend in the Hills 2 day Bealtaine Festival! This weekend will focus on welcoming in the new season and planting seeds and learning a new craft that you can continue

to build on throughout the year and your life. We have still a few places on our Basket Making, Wood Turning and Wild Food Foraging courses

To book your place and to find our more please visit - <https://www.celtnet.org/mayweekinthehills202>

## Living in Balance: Community Actions for Nature

May 10th @ 10am  
Cork

**You are invited to the launch of  
National Biodiversity Week!**

Join us and Cork County Public Participation Network as we celebrate the launch of National Biodiversity Week with a special event all about long term actions for nature.

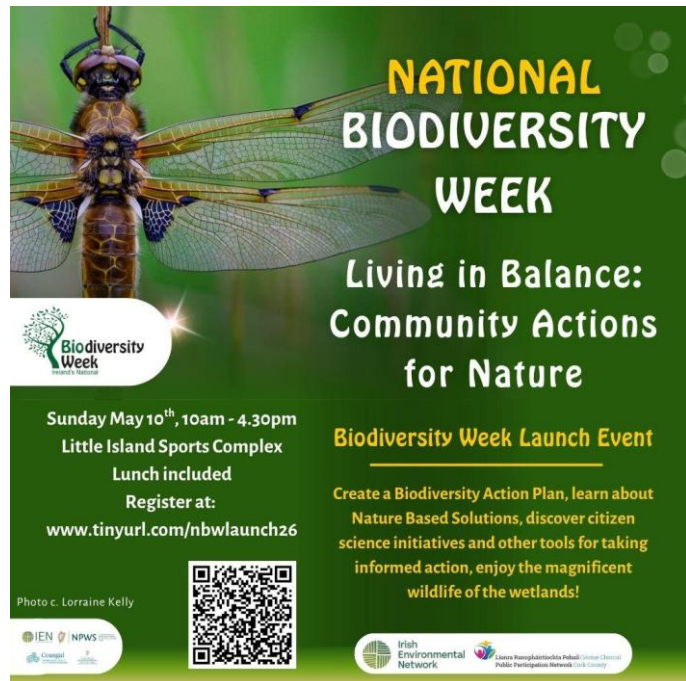
We are excited to be joined by our guest speakers for the day and look forward to welcoming you to Harpers Island in Cork!

Learn how to **create an plan of action** for helping biodiversity in your local area with ecologist Karen Loxton, and hear how a Biodiversity Action Plan works in practice with examples from Green Skibbereen.

Discover **Nature Based Solutions** with Michelle McKeown from UCC, what they are and how they could help locally and nationally. Find out about the different **Citizen Science** initiatives available from the National Biodiversity Data Centre with Rachel Hayden and how you can use them in your own work.

Complete the day with a **guided walk through Harpers Island Wetlands** with Birdwatch Ireland and take part in a biobiltz along the way.

- **When:** Sunday May 10th, 10am - 4.30pm
- **Where:** Little Island Sports Complex, Little Island, Cork
- **Register here:** <https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/1987019542942?aff=oddtcreator>



The poster features a large dragonfly on a green background. Text on the poster includes: 'NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY WEEK', 'Living in Balance: Community Actions for Nature', 'Biodiversity Week Launch Event', 'Sunday May 10<sup>th</sup>, 10am - 4.30pm', 'Little Island Sports Complex', 'Lunch included', 'Register at: www.tinyurl.com/nbwlaunch26', and 'Create a Biodiversity Action Plan, learn about Nature Based Solutions, discover citizen science initiatives and other tools for taking informed action, enjoy the magnificent wildlife of the wetlands!'. Logos for IEN, NPWS, and the Irish Environmental Network are at the bottom.



## FINAL SHOWCASE & AWARD CEREMONY 2026

### **The Young Environmentalist Awards: Final Showcase & Awards Ceremony 2026**

*May 12th 10:30am  
Dublin*

The ECO-UNESCO Young Environmentalist Awards (YEA) 2026 will culminate in its Final Showcase and Awards Ceremony on Tuesday May 12 at the Concert Hall, RDS Dublin.

This action-packed national event brings together finalist groups from across Ireland to present their youth-led environmental action projects, developed throughout the year as part of the YEA programme. The day is split into two key events: a Showcase, where young people (10-18), exhibit over 110 finalist projects from 29 counties and share their achievements with peers, judges and guests, and an Awards Ceremony, where Awardees for each category are announced and celebrated. The day will also feature interactive exhibitions, workshops and talks, where up to 1,000 attendees will get to experience the inspiring work on display.

The projects reflect a wide range of environmental themes, including biodiversity, climate action, fast fashion, and sustainable living, highlighting the creativity and commitment of young people addressing real-world challenges.

At the final stage of their 2026 YEA journey, this event celebrates the innovation and dedication of young people taking meaningful action in their communities, while showcasing their achievements on a national stage.

The showcase is free to attend and open to all – registration is required.

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*You are cordially invited  
to the Launch of*  
***Seeds of Inspiration***  
A documentary film and book on the  
growing of Monaghan's Native Trees  
by renowned expert John McKeon

*Guest Speaker: Éanna Ní Lamhna*



Venue : Iontas Theatre, Castleblayney, A75 HK09  
**Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2026**  
Welcome Reception from 7pm

RSPV :  
[biodiversity@monaghancoco.ie](mailto:biodiversity@monaghancoco.ie)  
(042) 9428330



## **Seeds of Inspiration: Growing Native Trees from Seed with John McKeon**

*May 14th, 7pm  
Monaghan*

We are launching a new documentary film and accompanying book, *Seeds of Inspiration: Growing Native Trees from Seed with John McKeon*.

The documentary highlights John McKeon's passion for growing native trees from seed and his dedication to promoting their planting in hedgerows etc. The beautifully illustrated book complements the film by exploring Ireland's native trees and offering practical guidance on how to propagate them.

This project is the result of a collaboration between the Monaghan Branch of the Irish Wildlife Trust and the Biodiversity Section of Monaghan County Council.

The screening and launch will take place at the Iontas Centre, Castleblayney, on Thursday, 14th May at 7:00pm. We are especially pleased to welcome well-known wildlife enthusiast and broadcaster Éanna Ní Lamhna as our guest speaker.

Anyone interested in attending can RSVP to [biodiversity@monaghancoco.ie](mailto:biodiversity@monaghancoco.ie) or tel 042 942 8330.

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## National Biodiversity Week 2026

Save The Date  
May 15th - 24th  
Nationwide

Free events nationwide! New events added every week! Check our calendar of events at [www.biodiversityweek.ie](http://www.biodiversityweek.ie).

Explore the rich variety of life in Ireland this May with a host of wonderful events and activities for the whole family.

2026 brings the 14th annual Biodiversity Photographer of the Year competition, Scavenger Hunts for school and at home, and free events every day on all things wildlife in Ireland! Events will be both in person and virtual, so everyone can take part.



**NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY WEEK**  
Friday 15th - Sunday 24th  
May 2026

**Free Events Every Day**

**Biodiversity Photographer of the Year**

**Bioblitz & Scavenger Hunt**

**Free Events Nationwide**  
Explore the rich variety of life in Ireland this May with a host of wonderful events and activities for the whole family.  
[www.BiodiversityWeek.ie](http://www.BiodiversityWeek.ie)

Photo © Lorraine Kelly

Logos: IEN, NPWS, Ceangal



**FEEDING OURSELVES WEBINAR**

**SECURING OUR FOOD SOVEREIGNTY**  
TUESDAY, MAY 19 | 15:30 - 17.00

As global shocks expose the fragility of Ireland's input-dependent, export-oriented food system, we ask - what would it take to secure our food sovereignty?

Logos: Talamh Beo, cultivate, feasta

Part of the Strengthening Local Food Economies in Ireland Project supported by the IEN

QR code: SCAN OR CLICK BELOW TO BOOK A FREE PLACE <https://bit.ly/4twPG8B> SUSTAINABLE.IE

## Feeding Ourselves Webinar - Securing our Food Sovereignty

May 19th, 3.30pm - 5pm  
Online

As global shocks expose the fragility of Ireland's input-dependent, export-oriented food system, we ask - what would it take to secure our food sovereignty? The session will explore how local food production, public procurement and a stronger domestic food economy can help build a fairer, healthier and more resilient food future.

Register here

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/al5uvVKIT6CGLDLbqFRSdQ>



## Irish Forest School Association Annual Gathering 2026 Bookings are now open!

May 22nd - 24th  
Wicklow

We are delighted to welcome you to our eighth Annual Gathering and AGM at the Knockree Hostel, Co. Wicklow. We hope to use this opportunity to Celebrate 10 years of the Irish Forest School Association! Our connection with trees, songs, games and birds, together in community with each other.

[More info and tickets](#)



## IWDG Residential Weekend Whale Watching Course

May 29th - 31st  
West Cork

Looking for a weekend with a difference? Why not join the Irish Whale and Dolphin Group (IWDG) [www.iwdg.ie](http://www.iwdg.ie), Ireland's leading marine conservation NGO, on an immersive, residential weekend whale-watching course in West Cork over the June bank holiday weekend on May 29-31st. Combining indoor presentations, land-based watches and an offshore pelagic trip, this course will cater for all levels of interest, from the complete novice to the wildlife enthusiast who'd like to learn more about Ireland's marine megafauna, how to observe and identify them, IWDG's recording schemes and research, and how you, as Citizen Scientists, can contribute to their conservation. In taking part, you will also be supporting whale and dolphin conservation in Ireland. Suitable from ages of 18 years upwards.

[Get tickets here](#)

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## JUNE & JULY EVENTS

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### **World Ocean Week Conference - 3rd June 2026 - Cork City Hall**

*June 3rd, 9:30am  
Cork*

Join us in Cork for the second Fair Seas Conference in 2026. We will be kicking off World Ocean Week 2026 with a splash in Cork Harbour. We will again bring ocean advocates, the fishing community, government, industry and key stakeholders together to map out Ireland's next steps for designating and managing a network of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs).

Learn from best practices from across the world, be part of the conversation and develop an understanding of how Ireland can become a world leader in ocean conservation.

Join us in Cork City Hall on Wednesday, 3rd of June, from 9. 30 am to 4.30 pm.

[Book your ticket today](#)

## Resources & Training



### Introduction to Wildlife Rehabilitation Course

May 16th & 17th  
Meath



We are delighted to be running our two-day Introduction to Wildlife Rehabilitation course again this year. This course provides a comprehensive foundation in the principles, ethics and practical skills needed to safely rescue, assess, treat and care for injured or orphaned wild animals in Ireland. Designed for rehabilitators, veterinary professionals, students and wildlife enthusiasts, the course covers legal and ethical responsibilities, safe capture and handling, physical examinations, first aid, common conditions, nutrition, housing, zoonoses and release considerations. With small group sizes and hands-on practical sessions using Irish wildlife cadavers, participants gain tailored instruction and experience in essential techniques such as tube feeding, injections, bandaging and assembling a wildlife rescue kit. The course is designed to build confidence, competence and understanding, supporting best practice in wildlife rehabilitation across Ireland.

[More info](#)



### Open for Enrolment: ECO-UNESCO's QQI Level 5 Course in Sustainable Development

ECO-UNESCO is offering a Level 5 Minor Award in Sustainable Development designed to build understanding and practical skills in sustainability practice.



This course may be of particular interest to teachers, educators, senior cycle students, school leavers, and early-career professionals interested in environmental action and sustainable living.

Learners explore key themes such as the pillars of sustainable development, climate change, biodiversity, resource use, globalisation, and fair trade. Alongside this, the course develops applied skills through environmental auditing, project work, and the design and delivery of sustainability-focused workshops, with a strong emphasis on community engagement and real-world impact.

Delivered in-person in Dublin over 10-12 weeks, the programme combines collaborative group learning with practical, hands-on sustainability activities and independent work, supporting participants to apply their learning in meaningful environmental contexts. If you're interested in this course, please fill out the form linked below on our website, and we'll contact you with more details.

Applications close in May. For information on fees and application requirements, please contact [training@ecounesco.ie](mailto:training@ecounesco.ie) or visit Level 5: Sustainable Development - ECO-UNESCO - Environmental Youth Organisation

[More info](#)



## Level 6 : Ecology and the Environment

Open for Enrolment: ECO-UNESCO's QQI Level 6 Course in Ecology and the Environment

ECO-UNESCO is offering a Level 6 Minor Award in Ecology and the Environment in June 2026, providing a thorough introduction to ecological systems, biodiversity, and environmental conservation.



This course may be of a particular interest to teachers, educators, school leavers, higher education students, and professionals with an interest in ecology and biodiversity. Participants will explore habitat management, biodiversity protection, and environmental policy, while building practical field skills in species identification, habitat surveying, water quality assessment, and invasive species management across a range of Irish ecosystems.

Delivered over two weeks in Dublin, the programme combines classroom-based learning with field trips to local ecological sites. Assessment is based on a project, assignment, and written examination, supporting applied learning and progression into further study or work in environmental and sustainability fields.

Applications close mid-May. For information on fees and application requirements, please contact [training@ecounesco.ie](mailto:training@ecounesco.ie) or visit Level 6: Ecology and the Environment - ECO-UNESCO - Environmental Youth Organisation

[More info](#)

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## Community Reusable Party Pack Now Available



The County Carlow Environmental Network is hosting a **community reusable party pack** which can be borrowed for free by members of the community. It is part of an initiative aimed to help communities across the Southern Waste Region celebrate more sustainably.

Each reusable party pack caters for 30, with cups, plates, cutlery, jugs, and bowls, as photographed above, along with bunting that has been created by the Community Reuse Network Ireland (CRNI), using upcycled textiles. The kit all fits snugging into a plastic box for transportation and storage, also supplied.

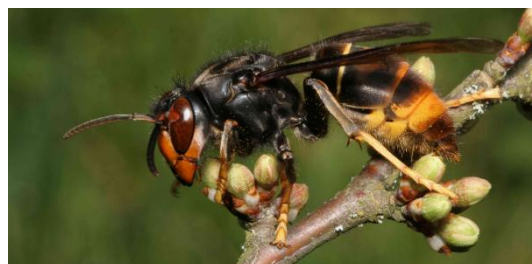
All items are washable, reusable and designed to be shared within the community. They can be used for any type of community gathering, celebration or event.

### How will it work?

When a celebration or event is planned, residents can borrow the pack from us by emailing Molly at [info@ccen.ie](mailto:info@ccen.ie)

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## New Asian Hornet Reporter Launched



The National Biodiversity Data Centre has recently launched the Asian Hornet Reporter, a new system for reporting Asian hornet (*Vespa velutina*) sightings in Ireland. The Asian hornet, also known as the yellow-legged hornet, is a highly invasive species that poses a serious threat to honeybees and other pollinators. To stop the spread and establishment of the Asian hornet in Ireland, it is important that the public become aware of what it looks like and how to report suspected sightings.

[More info here](#)

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## Helping Nature at School

Free course from the National Biodiversity Data Centre.

This is a FREE course designed for teachers, educators, principals, caretakers, SNAs, secretaries, Parents' Associations and indeed everyone involved in our education community across Irish primary, secondary and preschools.

In a simple and relaxed manner, you will explore the importance of biodiversity and learn practical steps to help it at your school.

[Learn more here](#)

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## Announcements



## Tipp ecovillage's new dark sky lighting sets Irish precedent

Cloughjordan Ecovillage has installed street lighting, setting an Irish precedent for community lighting. With special downlit poles and bollards, dimmable warm-coloured LEDs and limited light-up hours, the system minimises light pollution and disturbance to nocturnal creatures.

Lighting designer Kerem Asfuroglu said it "is an important precedent for Ireland where communities and authorities work together to protect their dark skies".

Installed in order to fulfill a condition of planning permission, the system was influenced by a local Dark Sky group and the results of ecological surveys which found eight of Ireland's nine native bat species, and 62 moth species in one night.

“Our new lights are the result of a wonderful collaborative effort between those of us who live here, our lighting designer and consultant engineer, Tipperary County Council public lighting engineers, electrical installers, lamp makers and bat and moth specialists,” said ecovillager Nigel Quinlan.

Tipperary County Council public lighting engineer Michael Tierney commended the system. Bat Conservation Ireland’s Niamh Roche said she hoped “local authorities and developers will look to Cloughjordan Ecovillage” as an example of best practice.

The lighting was funded by the Department of the Environment’s Community Climate Action Programme.

[Read more](#)



## 20% Discount on All Bikes

We’re offering a 20% discount on all bikes at the Rediscovery Centre until Bike Week!

Get ready for summer cycling by popping into our Eco Store to test ride your next bike! We’ve got a range of adult and kid’s bikes, and our friendly staff can help you choose the right one for you.



Offer from 21 April until 17 May.

We’re open from 9am - 5pm, Monday to Saturday.  
Shop in store or [rediscoverycentre.ie](https://www.rediscoverycentre.ie)

## Celebrating the Future of Sustainable Fashion at the Relove Fashion Awards

Young people from all over Ireland gathered at Dublin City University on the 15th of April for the largest Relove Fashion Final in the competition’s history, celebrating creativity, innovation and sustainability in fashion.



The finalists aged 12-19 reimagined old clothes and other household fabrics, creating outfits from unwanted, and in many cases unexpected fabrics, including old umbrellas, pillowcases and shower curtains. All of the submitted outfits were required to be both washable and wearable, demonstrating not only creativity but also practicality and durability.

The Relove Fashion Competition proves that style doesn’t have to cost the earth - and that Ireland’s young people are ready to lead the charge for a circular fashion future!

58 finalists from 29 local authority areas were chosen to reach the final and there were 24 award winners. The winners, chosen by a panel of judges and listed below, were announced at the Grand Final, MC'd by performer Paul Ryder.



## **Powerscourt "Working with Nature Awards" launched before Earth Day.**

The **Working with Nature Awards** recognise individuals, community groups and organisations across Ireland who are actively protecting, restoring and reconnecting people with nature. Now in its second year, the Awards celebrate impactful work across three categories: **1. Biodiversity & Rewilding, 2. Nature Media, and 3. Nature Education & Wellbeing.**

Open to projects of all sizes, the Awards aim to highlight real, on-the-ground action while providing a platform to share stories that inspire wider change.

Nominations are now open until **25 May**, with the Awards Ceremony taking place on **2 July** at Powerscourt Estate.

More information and entry details:

[www.powerscourt.com/workingwithnature](http://www.powerscourt.com/workingwithnature)

## **Public Consultations, Surveys & Campaigns**

### **Public consultation for the Draft Mayo Biodiversity Action Plan 2026-2031**

Will take place between Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April and Friday 29<sup>th</sup> May 2026. The draft plan and associated documents are available to view on the consultation portal: [Public Consultation Draft Mayo Biodiversity Action Plan 2026 - 2031 | Mayo County Council](#)

## Volunteering Opportunities

### Voluntary External Chairperson of ECO-UNESCO's Education and Training Committee

ECO-UNESCO is seeking Expressions of Interest for the voluntary role of External Chairperson of our Education and Training Committee.

This governance role offers the opportunity to support the quality and integrity of our QQI-accredited programmes (NFQ Levels 3-6). As Chair, you will provide independent leadership, overseeing academic standards, programme quality, and learner supports, while ensuring QQI compliance. The Committee advises the Board and supports independent, learner-focused decision-making. This is a voluntary role that has quarterly meetings, usually online.

We are particularly interested in individuals who have experience in the Further Education and Training (FET) sector and bring governance experience, ideally including chairing committees or boards. Candidates should hold a minimum NFQ Level 8 qualification and have an understanding of quality assurance frameworks, including QQI. We are also seeking individuals who are independent and aligned with ECO-UNESCO's mission.

To apply:

Send CV and Expression of Interest Letter to ECO-UNESCO's Office Manager,  
[gary.donegan@ecounesco.ie](mailto:gary.donegan@ecounesco.ie)

Closing date: 8th May 2026. More details can be found here: <https://ecounesco.ie/join-our-team/>

## Funding Opportunities

### Sustainability Step-up Fund

The Sustainability Step-Up Fund is a €1.5 million, two-year fund supported by Zurich in Ireland and the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht (DRCDG) via the Dormant Accounts fund.

The Sustainability Step-Up Fund supports social innovations across Ireland to step up their impact and address the climate crisis and its interconnected challenges. It is aimed at grassroots organisations, community-led initiatives, social enterprises and other non-profits that build resilience, promote sustainable practices, foster climate action and environmental stewardship and support the circular economy so that the benefits of the green transition are shared equitably.

Deadline 28th May

[More info](#)

## Job Opportunities

## The IEN is currently hiring for two great roles on the all-island CHANGE project.

- CHANGE Senior Programme Officer (Full Time)
- CHANGE Digital Officer (Part Time)

The Collaborative Horizons for All-island Nature and Governance Enhancement (CHANGE) project is a cross-border initiative designed to strengthen environmental governance and cooperation in response to increasing regulatory divergence and shared ecological challenges in a post-Brexit context. Delivered in partnership by Northern Ireland Environment Link (NIEL) and the Irish Environmental Network (IEN), the project supports collaboration, evidence-led policy development, and capacity-building among environmental organisations, public bodies, and communities across Northern Ireland and Ireland.

We are seeking a senior Programme Officer and a senior Digital Officer (part time) for the CHANGE project.

Further details at: <https://www.ien.ie/about/vacancies/>

ENQUIRIES: All enquiries should be sent to [jobs@ien.ie](mailto:jobs@ien.ie)

CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS: 5pm Wednesday 13 May

APPLICATION AND ENQUIRIES: CV and a covering letter to [jobs@ien.ie](mailto:jobs@ien.ie)



### Our Members

Find out who our members are & learn about their crucial work



### Find out more about the work of IEN members

The Irish Environmental Network has 34 nationally active members, who work on a wide variety of environmental, biodiversity and sustainability issues.

You can read more about their work, get involved, or sign up to their newsletters to hear directly from them on their websites.

[See all members here](#)