



# IRD Duhallow LIFE Newsletter

*Project Update (June 2015)*



## End of LIFE project conference and launch of new LIFE project:



**21st May 2015 (Natura 2000 day) IRD DuhallowLIFE end of project conference:** Almost 4.5 years on and the IRD DuhallowLIFE project will soon come to an end. The lessons learnt and restoration work carried out has been substantial. Over 40km of river bank and drains treated for invasive species, 30km of river bank fenced, 1000's of native trees planted, to name but a few works carried out and not to mention all of the nature awareness raising and troubleshooting. To celebrate this we are holding a conference to mark the end of the project. The conference will cover the activities carried out by the project and all of those who helped out in so many ways. We will also feature speakers from other EU LIFE projects from both within and outside

Ireland: 3WatersLIFE (Belgium), AquaLutraLIFE (Slovenia), Pearls in Peril UK LIFE (England/Scotland/Wales), Hen harrierLIFE (UK) and MulkearLIFE (ROI). This will be followed by live music and a banquet. Booking is essential. Contact the LIFE project at IRD Duhallow if you are interested in attending: Tel 029-60633

### 22nd May 2015: RaptorLIFE project launch:

The launch of the new *RaptorLIFE* project will take place at the same venue on the following day. This exciting new LIFE project builds on the previous project, focusing on the upper portion of the River Backwater and the surrounding hilly areas, which are designated as Special Protected Areas for Birds. The project aims to improve the conservation of Hen harrier, Merlin, Atlantic salmon and Brook lamprey by carrying out a range of on the ground conservation measures, such as planting trees and the removal of invasive species in a range of habitats and along the roadways. The project aims to work closely with people on the ground with designated lands to develop long term solutions for everybody's benefit. There will also be presentations on the project itself including contributions from Local Authorities, Bird NGOs and local participants in our projects. Contact the LIFE project at IRD Duhallow if you are interested in attending: Tel 029-60633



### Conservation Plan for the upper River Blackwater SAC

IRD Duhallow are developing a Conservation Plan for the Upper Blackwater Special Area of Conservation. We are liaising with key stakeholders in the area and members of the public. A draft copy of the report is available for comment, for a copy of the draft report please contact Kieran Murphy at 029-60633 or duhallow@eircom.net



### Schools "nature detective programme" get off to a good start

This hugely popular "Species Recording Programme" or "Nature Detective Programme" is now underway in the national schools in Duhallow. This programme encourages school children to take an active part in the recording of wildlife in their locality which is then put onto an online map. With the assistance of Mary Immaculate College (UL) we are analysing the trends from the nature recordings collected by the children to date and are finding out some interesting facts. Why not check out our online Wildlife species recording map at [www.duhallowLIFE.com](http://www.duhallowLIFE.com)



### **Otter log piles**

We are delighted that all of the planned 28 otter log piles are now in place along the River Allow and its tributaries. These log piles are comprised of tree logs cut and placed following the recommendations of international Otter experts. Sort of like little homes for animals, they provide refuge for otters and other mammals to hide along the river banks. We have already constructed and placed 10 artificial otter holts thereby improving otter habitat in Duhallow.

### **National Hen Harrier Survey**

The 2015 national Hen harrier Survey is now underway and IRD Duhallow are assisting the survey coordinators (Golden Eagle Trust and Bird Watch Ireland), with survey work in Duhallow. It is important that these surveys are accurate and that good information is collected as Hen harriers numbers have fallen dramatically in recent years here in Duhallow. For more information on Hen harriers and the work that we are doing contact the LIFE project at IRD Duhallow at 029-60633.



### **Forum for Hen harriers and Farmers**

At a recent meeting IRD Duhallow and the Irish Farmers with Designated Lands have agreed to work together with other stakeholders to explore issues affecting both farmers and Hen harriers in designated areas. The aim is to try and identify opportunities for the farming community whilst also maintaining the habitats of rare birds such as Hen harrier and Merlin. This should also compliment the pending Hen Harrier Threat Response Plan which Ireland is required to produce.

### **Take a walk along the new Pitch and Putt course and appreciate the nature**

As you probably know the new Pitch and Putt course and open air walk at the James O'Keeffe Institute, are ready for business for all of you walkers, pro and not so pro golfers. Well if you do take a chance to swing a club or go for a walk, why not take some time out to appreciate nature colonising the new ponds and the restored stream running along the boundary of the greens. The restoration work was inspired by surveys and techniques developed by the LIFE project and are worth a look. Frogs have recently spawned in the ponds and the beautiful Yellow Flag Iris are now in full bloom along the water's edge. If you look closely you should be able to see brown trout darting about in the newly constructed pools in the restored stream, which prior to the restoration work was nothing more than a neglected drain. Nature is wonderful indeed and a little helping hand goes a long way. Why not do something to help nature in your "Neighbourhood"?



The IRD Duhallow LIFE+ project would like to acknowledge and thank all of the landowners, supporters and volunteers for their assistance with the project to date. If you would like further information or would like to participate as a volunteer please contact us for further details. IRD Duhallow LIFE project: Tel: 029-60633 or check us out at [www.duhallowLIFE.com](http://www.duhallowLIFE.com)



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