



Annex I* Bird Species found in the Allow River Catchment

Kingfisher
Cruidín

Kingfishers (*Alcedo atthis*) are attractive, brightly coloured birds associated with some of Ireland's rivers. The Kingfisher is relatively widely distributed throughout the country, although numbers are low, not just along waterways, but also around lakes, docks and canals. Kingfishers prefer lowland waterways and are territorial, with these territories being vigorously defended.

Adult birds seldom move far from their breeding territories (usually less than 10 km). Although juveniles leave their parent's territories during early autumn, and can travel distances up to 250km.

The kingfishers are cavity nesters with holes usually in earth banks on the sides of rivers and lakes. The Blackwater SAC is one of two rivers in Ireland that are designated for the conservation of the Kingfisher. Main threats to Kingfishers include: predation; low food supply due to pollution and loss of habitat due to flooding and bank erosion.



Bank erosion is having a devastating effect on wildlife along the Allow, including the Kingfisher which requires steep river banks to build nests. Research into erosion rates on the Allow River indicated that most banks were unsuitable for kingfishers to build their nests. To improve chances for Kingfishers, IRD Duhallow EU LIFE+ Project installed 12 artificial nest boxes at 6 locations in the Allow River Catchment.

Other Annex I* Bird Species



The IRD Duhallow LIFE Project is supported through the LIFE financial instrument of the European Community



Hen Harrier



Merlin



Little Egret

*EU Birds Directive [2009/147/EC]

Annex II* species found in the Allow River Catchment

Natura 2000 is the centrepiece of EU nature & biodiversity policy. It is an EU wide network of nature protection areas established under the 1992 Habitats Directive. The aim of the network is to assure the long-term survival of Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats. It is comprised of Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) designated by Member States under the Habitats Directive, and also incorporates Special Protection Areas (SPAs) which they designated under the 1979 Birds Directive.

European Otter *Madra Uisce*



Otters have sleek brown fur and a long, nimble body with a thick tail and short legs. They are found in a variety of aquatic habitats in Ireland such as lakes, rivers, streams, estuaries, marshland, canals and along the coast. Riparian habitat is considered to be of key importance to most otter populations. The importance of riparian habitat on mainland areas may in part be due to improved food production as well as for breeding areas.

Atlantic Salmon *Bradán*



Most Atlantic salmon are anadromous, travelling long distances from spawning rivers to their feeding grounds at sea. At sea they undergo their greatest feeding and growth, returning as adults to spawn in natal freshwater streams and rivers (November and December in Ireland). Main threats to the Atlantic Salmon include: Nutrient enrichment, river regulation, sewage, dredging, and water pollution, drainage and bank erosion leading to siltation to spawning beds. Salmon require clean, silt free gravel beds for spawning.

Freshwater Pearl Mussel *Diuilicín Fionnuisce*



The Freshwater Pearl Mussel is a bivalve, which is a type of mollusc or snail with a body that is almost completely enclosed between a pair of shells. Pearl Mussels are filter feeders. They inhale water through their exposed siphons to filter out minute organic particles on which they feed. Main threats to the freshwater pearl mussel include: nutrient enrichment, river regulation, sewage, dredging, water pollution, drainage and bank erosion leading to siltation.



Atlantic Salmon form an important part of Otter diet in Duhallow.



Salmon require clean, silt free gravel beds for spawning.



Snorkel Surveys by the IRD Duhallow EU LIFE Project team were performed to fully understand the numbers & populations of Freshwater Pearl Mussels in the Allow River.