



# IRD Duhallow LIFE Newsletter

*Project Update (Winter 2013)*



Winter is truly upon us. Now as the weather gets colder, many of our wildlife hibernate or migrate to warmer countries. Others stay put but slow down their activity to conserve their energy. This is all part of Nature's way of adapting to colder weather and the lower availability of food at this time of year. The IRD DuhallowLIFE project must adapt too and so over the coming months our team on the ground will be concentrating on project actions complimentary to the festive season, namely tree planting and pruning. This is all part of the projects overall aim to tackle river bank erosion and improve habitats for wildlife along our rivers in Duhallow. But as always public participation is key to our projects success and we are calling all those with an interest in environmental issues to get involved. Our website ([www.duhallowlife.com](http://www.duhallowlife.com)) and brochures give clear examples what you can do to help to assist wildlife and also potentially improve farmland vulnerable to river erosion. Contact the LIFE team at **IRD Duhallow; Tel. 029-60633** for further information.

## ***Christmas tree appeal***

This year we will repeat our very successful Christmas tree appeal. Last year over 1000 used Christmas trees were donated and put to use as River Bank protection on the Rivers Allow and Dalua. The UK Daily Telegraph described it as the "greenest use" of Christmas trees that they had encountered ever. The wildlife also love them and we found that small birds such as wrens in particular use them as habitat and for feeding in. Again we would like to thank those who recycled their trees with us and encourage the public to get involved again this year for this innovative use of the "auld" Christmas tree.



## ***Flood friendly fencing***

Our new technique for fencing along flood plains was severely tested by recently floods and thankfully passed with flying colours. Dr. Igoe of the project commented " we are very pleased with the results which will have practical uses not just in Duhallow but also across Europe for farmers who farm land prone to flooding".



## ***Conservation volunteers***



Due to interest from the public we have decided to initiate a structured volunteer programme. It is planned to hold an event at least once a month, giving people an opportunity to work with nature and conservation. This will be a good opportunity also for people with an interest in working with wildlife and practical conservation. Work will range from tree planting, removal of invasive species to monitoring of wildlife. If you are interested in getting involved, please forward your details to the LIFE team at IRD Duhallow.

### **Wildlife talks**

The project is organising talks which should be of great interest to the public. We are very fortunate that expert speakers are making themselves available for what will be an exciting and informative evening. Even if you know nothing about wildlife you should find this an enjoyable night, which also includes tea/coffee and cakes. Talks are free of charge and held at IRD Duhallow, James O'Keefe Institute, Newmarket, Co Cork.

*December 4th 2013; 7.00pm Dr. Paddy Sleeman; University College Cork*



#### **Corks' Otter, Badgers and Irelands' Biodiversity : why numbers of wild mammals matter.**

This talk will be of particular interest to people with an interest in badgers and otters. Dr. Sleeman will also speak about the TB issue and relevance of badgers in the spread of this disease.



*December 18th 2013; 7.00pm John Lusby; Birdwatch Ireland*

#### **Merlin - Irelands smallest and most secretive hawk.**

This talk will be of interest to landowners and people with an interest in birds and hawks especially.

### **LIFE project presents work to national meetings**

Recently the LIFE project presented to two important meeting. At **The National Agri-environment Conference** we presented on our work with farmers on the ground. At **The Strategic Environmental Assessment/Appropriate Assessment Regional Forum** we presented on our project actions and how working with key stakeholders on the ground can lead to improved management of the environment, water quality and also farmland near rivers. We believe that it is important that the issues affecting wildlife, farmers and other stakeholders in Duhallow are articulated nationally and to the relevant authorities. This should help drive better planning of future Agri-schemes and measures that work for people at a practical level.



#### **LIFE project says thanks**

This year we carried out a huge amount of work in the Upper Blackwater catchment, and we would like to say a special thank you to all those farmers who facilitated the project team and in many cases also lent a hand. In excess of 20km of river bank fencing has been completed and the project has also successfully tested a novel silt trapping design in farm drains. These traps were shown to be very effective and we are very excited about the results to date.



[www.duhallowLIFE.com](http://www.duhallowLIFE.com); Tel: 029-60633

***Wishing you all a very Happy Christmas!***