



IRD Duhallow LIFE Newsletter

Project Update (March 2014)



What a start to Spring; Weather alerts, strong gales and severe flooding. Such difficult conditions makes one wonder how our wildlife cope under such damp and stormy weather conditions. But cope they do and we are looking forward to working with everybody to improve the lot of wildlife and people in Duhallow this year. The bank revetment work carried out by the LIFE project took a severe hammering from the recent flooding. We are pleased that despite the extreme conditions the works held up well and we look forward to the bank vegetation establishing itself further this year further reinforcing the river banks.

Working with farmers

The project will continue to work with farmers and landowners this year and we hope to be able to roll out our programme to help manage cattle along river banks. Building on the extensive river bank fencing work last year, we aim to install cattle drinking locations where necessary. Additionally we have a range of water provision options to roll out once the weather improves. These will be tailored to meet on the ground requirements and conditions and the project team will be in contact landowners as appropriate.



Bird boxes

The Irish Dipper is a small dark brown bird that lives and feeds in rivers. The bird has an unusual bobbing behaviour; it bobs rhythmically along the water edge or on stones mid stream. This pattern of behaviour has occupied the minds of scientists and amateur naturalists for years; there are a number of possible explanations, ranging from predator avoidance to searching for food or even as a form of communication between birds. What we do know however is that Dippers like the bird boxes installed under bridges by the LIFE project and it is intended to add an additional 20 nest boxes this year. We hope that these will prove as successful as those previous installed by the project.



Volunteers

The volunteer programme will commence in March and we would like to thank people who have already contacted IRD Duhallow expressing an interest in this exciting initiative. If you are interested please contact us for further details. IRD Duhallow LIFE project: Tel: 029-60633 or check us out at www.duhallowLIFE.com.



Anglers wanted to fish for baby pearl mussels

Following on from our very successful angling survey last year, we are again looking for anglers to assist us in our survey of Freshwater Pearl Mussel in the Blackwater and tributaries. We are asking anglers to check the gills of trout that they catch to see if they have little white spots on them. *(They are most pronounced at the start of the fishing season).*

These spots are the “glochidea” or parasitic phase of the Freshwater Pearl Mussel. We are using these “glochidea” to determine the

distribution and genetics of Freshwater Pearl Mussel. We are also interested in the characteristics of the trout to which these baby pearl mussels have attached. Please contact the LIFE team at IRD Duhallow if you would like to get involved. Tel: 02960633.

Website gets a facelift

We are delighted to be able to announce the introduction of a kiddies corner for our " Young Nature Detectives". This now includes direct access to the species recording map, cartoons for colouring and information on the target wildlife species. Go on check it out. www.duhallowLIFE.com

Programme of works

As the weather improves we plan to continue our programme of works which will include more school visits with our partner Inland Fisheries Ireland, riparian work but pruning and planting trees, working with farmers and forestry to reduce silt erosion and hopefully resolve planning issues to progress bank protection work. We would like to thank all those working with the project and for their support to date.



Universities increase the LIFE learning

The LIFE+ project is an ideal opportunity for Students to get experience of working with wildlife and nature conservation. We are delighted to be working with students from University College Cork, Tralee Institute of Technology and Mary Immaculate College Limerick. Projects include scientific analysis of the wildlife data collected by our National School children to the mapping of Freshwater Pearl Mussel data collected by our trained sub-aqua surveyors. All of this helps improve our knowledge of our environment and how we can all make a difference.

2014 IRD Duhallow Calendar



IRD Duhallow has produced an attractive calendar following on from the very popular LIFE calendar produced last year. This year's calendar features the broad spectrum of environmental work (river restoration, raptor conservation, birds watching etc.) being undertaken by IRD Duhallow, including work being done under the LIFE project. If you would like one of these Calendars contact us at IRD Duhallow LIFE project: Tel: 029-60633.



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