

BioBlitz 2015

Club members who planned to record for the Club's fourth recording BioBlitz watched the weather anxiously in the lead up to Saturday 13th June. The weather forecast was constantly changing but once the threat of heavy rain and high winds disappeared it was all systems go for the event which this year took place in the grounds of Newtownbarry House, Bunclody. Heavy rain showers greeted the small group who arrived on site on Friday night to set up moth traps and record any other nocturnal activity. The showers soon cleared and once the traps were in place those present were treated to a great display from the many bats that flew around the woods and gardens.

Seventeen members arrived early on Saturday morning to begin the main recording. It was overcast and cool, which wasn't great for recording insect species, however shortly after noon the sun came out and with it the insect numbers rose. Another seventeen members arrived to help out through the course of the day with Nicholas and Breda Egan bringing along the Club's newest "member", their eight week old daughter Áine.

188 species had been recorded up to 12.30pm but with Paul Green, Paula O'Meara, Zoë Devlin, Margaret Scally and Ciarán Byrne out recording plants we knew that figure would rise considerably. Rise it did and by the end of the recording session a total of 412 species had been recorded.

Nine species of ladybirds and shieldbugs were recorded which made a great start to the Club's latest recording project, "The Ladybirds and Shieldbugs of County Wexford".



14-spot Ladybird

The “star” species of the day must surely be the Bird’s-nest Orchid, the first recorded in the county in over seventy years! Club member Paul Green, joint vice county recorder for the Botanical Society of Great Britain and Ireland, informed us that this species was first recorded from Wexford in 1896 by Robert Lloyd Praeger at Courtown and again at Courtown in 1941 & 1943 by Mildred Ferguson.



Bird’s-nest Orchid

Thanks to all members who supported this very enjoyable event. Special thanks to Clody and Alice Norton who gave us the run of their gardens and estate. All records will be entered on the Club's records database and sent to the National Biodiversity Data Centre once validation is complete. A copy will be sent to the Norton family also.

Report: Mary Foley, Photos: Chris Wilson

Wildlife Walk

The BioBlitz 2015 afternoon walk enjoyed a delightful stroll down through the wood beside the stream and out into the large paddock that is situated between the main woodland and River Slaney. Following the edge of the woodland we wandered to the far corner, then back along the banks of the river and back up to the main house. It was surprising where the time went as there were constant stops to listen to a bird, examine a new insect or plant found. The nettle beds were particularly lucrative turning up a variety of different species. Cameras were kept busy photographing the odd spider, ladybird or plant. Meanwhile the sun had come out making the afternoon particularly enjoyable. Much debate was spent on the identity of one particular immature shieldbug and the sounds of baaing sheep, the odd click of a golf ball being hit on the other side of the river and the general chat added to the ambience of a delightful summer's afternoon shared with a 'great group'.



Report and Photo: Chris Wilson