



Wexford Naturalists' Field Club,
c/o Wexford Wildfowl Reserve, North Slob, Wexford, Ireland.

WNFC Newsletter

Issue number 51

September 2018

Welcome to the September issue of the WNFC newsletter. A special welcome to the following new members: Lyla Davies, Brigid Walsh, John Fortune and Nicola Rawle.

UPCOMING CLUB EVENTS

All lectures will be held at 8pm in The Pumphouse, Wexford Wildfowl Reserve. Since events may change due to unforeseen circumstances please check for last minute updates sent by email and posted on the club website. Details are also available by telephoning Wexford Wildfowl Reserve (076)1002660.

October

Thursday 4th: *"Wildlife Travels in the Arctic"* by Jim Wilson, Ornithologist and Writer.

Saturday 13th: Coach trip to Wicklow Mountains National Park with Jason Monaghan, NPWS Conservation Ranger. Coach fare €25. For further information and booking contact the Club Secretary or email info@wexfordnaturalists.com €10 non-refundable deposit required with booking.

November

Thursday 1st: *"Walking The Barrow Way"* by Dr Liam Lysaght, National Biodiversity Data Centre.

Saturday 10th: Field trip to identify fungi and lichens with Maria Cullen, Mycologist. Meet at 11am outside the tearooms in Johnstown Castle (T020 166).

December

Thursday 6th: *"Raven Wood Nature Reserve: past and present"* by Dominic Berridge, Warden, Wexford Wildfowl Reserve.

Saturday 8th: Tintern Woods in winter with Marion Brady. Meet at 11am in the car park at Tintern Abbey (S793 101).

DECEASED MEMBER



It was with sadness that members learned of the death of Jo Matthews. Jo, along with her husband Brian, had been a long time member of the Club. We offer our condolences to Brian and their family. May she rest in peace.

RECORDING

One of the objectives of the Club is "To collect and record information regarding the natural history of County Wexford." Over 3200 records have been received from January to August this year. Many thanks to those members who continue to submit their sightings.

Some interesting records during the period June-September: The Wool-carder Bee, a species first recorded in Ireland in County Wexford in 2015, was seen in Adamstown, Drinagh, Ramsgrange and Wexford in June. A White-tailed Eagle was seen at Barmoney on 8th and 9th July and Rathnure on 5th August. A Dark Green Fritillary, a species normally associated with flower rich habitats such as dunes and calcareous grassland, was recorded in a garden in Duncormick in July and, also in July, Essex Skipper was recorded in two new 10km squares in the county. In August a Convolvulus Hawk-moth was found in Ramsgrange on 8th and 28th, a Clouded Yellow butterfly in Ballyteigue on 28th and a Great Spotted Woodpecker was seen in Camolin on 8th.

No matter how common or rare, please keep sending in your sightings. If you have recorded during the year, and haven't yet submitted your records, please pass on the details to our Records Officer, Mary Foley, at any club event or by email or submit online at records.biodiversityireland.ie/record/wexford-naturalists

Recording BioBlitz

Our Bioblitz was held in Rosegarland, Wellingtonbridge in July. Over 340 species were recorded. Thanks to all those who took part and helped make the day such a success.



Paul Green and Paula O'Meara busy botanising during the BioBlitz (Photo: Mick O'Connor)



BioBlitz 2018 -Taking a break from recording (Photo: Mary Foley)

Ladybird and Shieldbug Update

Although reported sightings are down this year we have still found some species in ten new hectads (10km squares). Tortoise Bug, an uncommon species found in semi-natural grassland and grassy hedge banks, was found in Curracloe by Jonathan Derham.

A Juniper Shieldbug discovered by Liz Mooney at Clonard has been confirmed by Dr. Brian Nelson, National Parks and Wildlife Service, as a first for County Wexford. Juniper Shieldbug has recently been seen in Tipperary breeding on Lawson's Cypress so it would be worth checking these out. The trees must be fruiting as it feeds on the fruits and seeds.



Tortoise Bug, with Dock Bug in background. (Photo: Jonathan Derham)



Juniper Shieldbug. (Photo: Liz Mooney)

Butterfly Atlas 2021

If you signed up to take part in the Five Visit Butterfly Monitoring Scheme, please send on your records to The National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC) by the end of October.



Comma (Photo: Mick O'Connor)

IDENTIFICATION SWATCHES

Identification Swatches covering bumblebees, butterflies, dragonflies and damselflies, ladybirds, shieldbugs and trees and shrubs are available to purchase at club events, price €5 each.

ART EXHIBITION

Wildlife artist, and WNFC member, Dave Daly will be holding his annual art exhibition in The Pumphouse, Wexford Wildfowl Reserve from Saturday 20th October to Sunday 4th November. "Images of Birds 2018" will be open 11am to 5pm every day. All welcome.



(Image courtesy Dave Daly)

IMPORTANT NOTICE - MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Because of the new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) rules our membership form will have to be filled out by each member or family every year. We can no longer hold data indefinitely. If you don't renew at the beginning of the year, you are of course welcome to join at any time during the year, provided that you fill in the form and pay appropriate amount. Membership covers January to December each year. We will change the form to comply with these rules. The new forms will be available from January at lectures, events and on the website.

AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER FIELD TRIPS

The rain didn't stop members from showing up for our recent field trips. Several plants recorded in Duncannon in August were new for the 1km square and one was a new 10km square record.



Field trip to look at plants in Duncannon with Paul Green and Paula O'Meara (Photo: Mary Foley)



Birdwatching in Carne with Dave Daly (Photo: Mary Foley)

ALL-IRELAND POLLINATOR PLAN

Pollinator Survey

Katherine Burns, a PhD student in NUIG, is currently conducting an online survey on the public's view of pollinating insects in Ireland. The National Biodiversity Data Centre has liaised with Katherine on this as the results will be very beneficial to the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan. You can help out by taking the anonymous survey at <https://t.co/XCUsW6A5NB>

Tracking Progress

The NBDC also has an online mapping system - Actions for Pollinators - where anyone who is helping can record what actions they have taken. Please consider logging your actions if you've not already done so. See pollinators.ie/record-your-actions/

BINOCULARS AND SWEEP NETS

The Club has binoculars for use by members. If anyone would like to use them on a field trip they can be pre booked by contacting Liz Mooney at any club event or by emailing the Club Secretary. Sweep nets, which can be useful to collect insects from long grass, are also available. Members can book these out for fieldtrips or take out on loan.

FOCUS ON:

RED SQUIRREL *Sciurus vulgaris*



(Photo: Dave Daly)

The Red Squirrel is a native mammal which depends on a woodland habitat. It is a protected species under the Wildlife Act. The body is reddish brown with a white underside. In winter the coat can have a grey hue which can lead to it being mistaken for the Grey Squirrel. Red Squirrels have ear tufts which are moulted in late summer, re grow in autumn, and are more prominent during the winter. These tufts are absent in the Grey Squirrel. The Red is smaller and more nimble with adults having a head and body length of 19-23cm and weigh between 270-360g, about half that of the Grey.

Red Squirrels can be found in all woodland habitats and nest in dreys built of sticks and foliage in trees. They spend most of their time foraging in the tree canopy whereas the greys spend a lot of time foraging at ground level. Their diet consists of seeds, nuts and berries and they cache food to feed on during the winter. Like the Grey Squirrel they do not hibernate but will remain in their nests for several days if the weather conditions are bad. An early morning visit to Raven Wood Nature Reserve near Curraclloe at this time of year can often be rewarded with glimpses of the Red Squirrel as it feeds in the trees. Look up into the canopy, watch out for clues such as eaten pine cones and listen out for the sound of the cones as they fall to the ground. If you put out nuts for birds you might even be lucky and have them visit your garden.

If you do see a Red Squirrel, or Grey Squirrel, please send in your records by any of the methods outlined in the recording article above.

CONTACT DETAILS

If any of your contact details change please let the Club Secretary know so that our database can be updated.

ARTICLES FOR NEWSLETTER

The next newsletter will be published in December. This is your newsletter, and natural history articles are always welcome. Items for inclusion may be passed on to me, Nicholas Egan, at any club event, by post or by email