



“Restoration of the Lower Shannon SAC (Mulkear River) for Sea Lamprey, Atlantic Salmon and the European Otter”

## Press Release

1<sup>st</sup> June 2012

### Full Listing of Photo Competition Winners

MulkearLIFE was overwhelmed by the sheer volume and standard of entries received in the project’s Amateur Photo Competition – ‘Exploring Biodiversity In the Lower Shannon’. The project would like to thank all who entered.

Given the fact that hundreds of entries were received, it was an extremely difficult job to select the winning images. The judging panel was extremely pleased with the overall quality of the images submitted, especially those in the ‘Young Adult’ category.

The prize giving ceremony was attended by a very large crowd including Minister of State Jan O’Sullivan TD and Minister of Finance Michael Noonan TD. The event formed part of MulkearLIFE’s LIFE @ 20 celebrations in Annacotty and the project was delighted that five of the six winners were on hand to collect their prizes.

The following is the full listing of winning images in both the Young Adult (under 18) and Adult category. A selection of additional images, both those Highly Commended and those images which were of significant merit will be uploaded on a separate webpage.

1st Place Prize Winner in the Adults category and the Overall Photo Competition Winner was an image entitled “Smiling Bottlenose Dolphin”. The image was taken in the Shannon Estuary by Ms. Rachel Crowley, from Galway. It is an extremely unusual pose for a dolphin. The judging panel felt the pose captured by Ms. Crowley and the overall quality of the image sealed it as the winner. Ms. Crowley received a new camera valued at over €500, a camera case and 4GB card. In addition, Ms. Crowley wins a day’s wildlife photography training with a leading professional wildlife and nature photographer Mr. John Murphy. Mr. Murphy was a member of the judging panel. The 2nd Place Winner with an image taken by Michael (Mick) Flanagan. The image is a wonderful shot taken along the Shannon of a curlew. The light, sharpness and subject matter of the image was commended by the judging panel. The 3rd Place Winner in the adult category was a stunning image entitled ‘Spawn Watch’ taken by Joan O’Neill from Bunratty. The image captures a spawning common frog.

In the Young Adults category, the 1st Place prize went to Kayleigh Berry from Annacotty with a wonderful image entitled “Carved Tree Trunk”. The image was taken by Kayleigh while out walking in the University of Limerick, in the Plassey area. The image is a carved tree trunk in the form of a chair, symbolising the human life form amidst wildlife and nature at the edge of the river. The 2nd Place Winner (Young Adults) was Aishling Power from Cappamore with a lovely image entitled ‘Catch of the Day’. The 3rd Place Winner (Young Adults) was Eleanor Leonne Bennett with a delightful image ‘Share a Lift Home’, of two snails.

The Minister of Finance Mr. Michael Noonan TD, was on hand to view the photo exhibition of all the winning entries and a selection of other images including those images highly commended.

The winning images have been printed in this week’s Limerick Leader. MulkearLIFE offers its congratulations to all winners and to all who took part in this exciting competition.

## Notes for Editors

1. High Resolution Digital Images are available to accompany this Press Release.
2. Interviews can be arranged with the Project Manager by using the contact details below.
3. MulkearLIFE is a new €1.75 million European Commission funded LIFE Nature project working on the restoration of the Lower Shannon Special Area of Conservation (with a focus on the Mulkear River catchment) for Atlantic Salmon, Sea Lamprey and European Otter. Further details may be viewed on the project website [www.mulkearlife.com](http://www.mulkearlife.com)
4. Inland Fisheries Ireland (Limerick) is lead partner together with the OPW and Limerick County Council. Additional funding support comes from National Parks and Wildlife Service. Other supporters include Teagasc, IFA, ICMSA, and local angling groups.
5. The project is one of the first and most important integrated catchment management projects in Ireland. It is a flagship EU LIFE Nature project –covering some 650 sq km which contain a variety of habitats and protected species. Much of the area is designated as a Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) under the EU Habitats Directive and forms part of the Natura 2000 Network.

### **Issued by:**

Ruairí Ó Conchúir, Project Manager – MulkearLIFE  
Inland Fisheries Ireland (Limerick Office)  
Ashbourne Business Park, Dock Road, Limerick  
Tel: 061 300 238 / Fax: 061 300 308 / Mob: 087 062 5582  
E-mail: [info@mulkearlife.com](mailto:info@mulkearlife.com)  
Web: [www.mulkearlife.com](http://www.mulkearlife.com) / [www.inlandfisheries.ie](http://www.inlandfisheries.ie)

