



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

Press Release

12th January 2012

February 2012 - Series of Four Illustrated Talks

MulkearLIFE today announces details of an exciting block of free Illustrated Talks. The talks form part of the Environmental Education Programme of MulkearLIFE working in the local community and local schools within the Mulkear catchment in counties Limerick and Tipperary. The February 2012 series of talks will focus on the extraordinarily rich natural heritage of Ireland and in particular the Mulkear Catchment and the Lower Shannon Special Area of Conservation. The series will take place over four Mondays in February and will include leading experts sharing their knowledge of otters, water quality and fresh water biodiversity, the white-tailed sea eagle, the conservation status of Irish mammals and the conservation work of MulkearLIFE. The venue for all talks is the Inland Fisheries Ireland office, Ashbourne Business Park, Dock Road, Limerick. There is plenty of free parking at the front of the building at night. Talks will commence at 8.00pm and there is free admission to all talks. Click Here [For Directions](#).

The first talk will take place on Monday 6th February. The guest speaker will be Mr. Ruairí Ó Conchúir and his talk is entitled “MulkearLIFE’s Work With Otters in the Mulkear Catchment”. Mr. Ó Conchúir is the manager of the EC funded LIFE+ project MulkearLIFE. He has worked in land care management, rural development and farming for conservation related work for over 20 years, including 10 years in Southern Africa. His talk will focus on the work of MulkearLIFE over the past three years to improve habitat for otters within the Mulkear Catchment. The talk will focus on the work of the project and its partners, together with the Mulkear Conservation Volunteers, to undertake catchment wide surveys, natal holt surveys and work to introduce new habitat and site selection for new artificial otter holts. His talk should be of particular interest to anyone with a general interest in Irish mammals and biodiversity.

Dr. Fiona Kelly will guest speak on Monday 13th February and her illustrated talk is entitled “Water Quality in Ireland’s Watercourses”. Dr. Kelly is a Senior Researcher with Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) in Swords. Her research is focused on fisheries related environmental issues including the Water Framework Directive. She is also responsible for IFI’s national fish monitoring programme. Water quality is the key ingredient to life in Ireland’s fresh water rivers, particularly fish. Dr. Kelly will outline the work that is going on at a national and local level to monitor water quality and fish. She will outline the work of IFI and partner organisations to ensure good water quality and prevent the loss of biodiversity. Dr. Kelly will also outline the effects of water pollution on fish in freshwater rivers and lakes. Her talk should be of particular interest to local anglers, farmers and anyone with an interest in fresh water biodiversity.

“White Tailed Sea Eagles on the Lower Shannon – A Dream or a Possibility?” is the title of the third talk on Monday 20th February with Dr. Allan Mee as guest speaker. Dr. Mee is manager of the White Tailed Sea Eagle Reintroduction Project based in Killarney National Park. Dr. Mee has worked on bird conservation for the past 25 years. He studied at Glasgow and Sheffield Universities where he did his doctorate before doing post-doctoral work on the endangered California Condor. His talk will focus on the reintroduction of sea eagles to Ireland, which has been one of the most challenging and exciting conservation projects ever undertaken in this country. Establishing a viable population is dependent on low adult mortality and good local community support. The first breeding attempts are expected by 2012-2013. His talk should be of particular interest to birdwatchers and anyone interested in biodiversity.

The series of illustrated talks will conclude on Monday 27th February with a talk by Dr. Ferdia Marnell entitled “The Conservation Status of Irish Terrestrial Mammals – From Black Rats to Brandt’s Bats”. Dr. Marnell completed his PhD on amphibian ecology in 1996 and joined the National Parks & Wildlife Service in 1997. After a period as Divisional Ecologist in Cork he transferred to the Scientific Unit as vertebrate ecologist. He now heads up the Animal Ecology Team. He has published on a wide variety of topics including newt habitat, frog distribution, lamprey conservation, bat calls, water beetles new to Ireland, deer range expansion, satellite tagging of leatherback turtles and otter population calculation. He edits NPWS’s Irish Wildlife Manuals series and was lead author on the recent Red Data List of Irish Terrestrial Mammals. His talk will focus on this Red Data List and the conservation status of Irish terrestrial mammals and should be of interest to all.

Admission to all talks is free of charge and all are welcome. Further information regarding any of the talks may be obtained from the project info@mulkearlifeproject.com or from MulkearlIFE, Inland Fisheries Ireland (Limerick) on telephone number 061 300 238 / 087 062 5582.

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 Mulkearl River catchment) for Atlantic Salmon, Sea Lamprey and European Otter. Further details may be viewed on the project website www.mulkearlifeproject.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@mulkearlifeproject.com
Web: www.mulkearlifeproject.com / www.inlandfisheries.ie

