

Irish Wildlife Trust

Annual Report

2013



IWT Annual Report 2013



Directors:

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Secretary: Tom Gorman

Charity No.: 006264

Summary of Activities in 2013

Education

The IWT conducted school visits supported through Local Agenda 21. The project was entitled 'Go Wild at School' which provided a programme of engaging pupils to build an ecosystem and become aware of their local natural environment.

Newt Survey

The IWT conducted a fourth National Smooth Newt Survey that was sponsored by Dublin Zoo and Fota Wildlife Park. The IWT held workshops outlining and demonstrating smooth newt ecology and surveying techniques in 9 counties; Roscommon, Sligo, Galway, Offaly, Meath, Wicklow, Tipperary, Kilkenny, and Kerry. The workshops were well attended and received in each locality. The IWT used social media and local media outlets to engage the public throughout the spring and summer of 2013. This resulted in 149 new records of smooth newt 2013 (287 records of newt have been submitted to IWT over the four years). The IWT facilitator was on the Mooney Show in March and also several local radio stations in March and April. He also delivered a newt workshop / talk to the parks staff of South Dublin County Council in April.

The IWT also provided with the appropriate care and permissions, a newt tank display at various events throughout the year such as Bloom in the Park and this generated big interest from the public and created further awareness of the presence of the species in Ireland.

An important development was a closer working relationship with the National Biodiversity Datacentre. They provided an online recording form for the general public which is accessible via the IWT website. Records of newts were quickly validated and appeared on the NBDC's live maps. This ensures that our collected records are in the public mainstream and this relationship with NBDC will now be a feature of any future surveys undertaken by us.

Badger Campaign

Fintan Kelly, IWT Intern carried out a scientific review of the policy of culling Badgers in the Republic of Ireland as a means of controlling the spread of Bovine TB within Cattle as part of his MSc Thesis. This review has informed our Campaign and

strengthened our stance to have our Government 'Stop Badger Culling' and change to a policy of vaccination. The IWT held many public talks and attended Bloom in the Park and the Ploughing Championships to further our aim of greater public awareness of the issues and for signatories to our Badger the Minister online petition. We have reached our goal of 10,000 signatures. We have two complaints against the Irish Government and its failures to comply with the Bern Convention with the Bern Secretariat. Our 'Not Guilty' T-shirt campaign grabbed the media attention and media campaign included working with BBC World News, BBC's Countryfile, BBC's Today show, RTE's Countrywide, interviews with the Sunday Times, Irish Times, Irish Examiner, The Ecologist and journal.ie to name a few. We also reached out to 'Team Badger' in the UK who is also campaigning against badger culling. This gave us the opportunity to work with the group's founder Brian May of 'Queen' fame who helped to boost the profile of our campaign.

We also worked in conjunction with the Kildare Animal Foundation Wildlife Unit, the Department of Agriculture and the National Parks and Wildlife Service to vaccinate and release two orphaned badgers. We produced a number of videos on the release which helped to educate the public about vaccination as well as being good PR for badgers in general, (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dPCrPiCISkU>).

Marine Campaign – Sustainable Seas OCEAN2012

Our Campaign Officer Padraic Fogarty and volunteers have been very busy working on marine issues in 2013. The IWT made submissions to the Marine Strategy Framework Directive initial assessment and the appropriate assessment for Roaring Water Bay in Cork. We recruited 200 scientists to write to Simon Coveney to set up marine protected areas in the Irish Sea. We were part of the successful campaign to end overfishing and rebuild fish stocks under the new Common Fisheries Policy announced in June 2013.

Agriculture and Land Use

We made a submission to the Food Harvest 2020 environmental assessment highlighting our concerns of the content of this document.

The IWT publicly reviewed the Bord Bia 'Origin Green' initiative and its green washing of environmental problems in Ireland. We met with An Bord Bia to discuss their Origin Green initiative.

<https://www.facebook.com/IrishWildlifeTrust/posts/10153381808895104>

In 2013, we have been developing our Wind Farm Policy in collaboration with our Longford / Westmeath Branch. This document is now at its final stages and will allow us to set out our position in relation to wind farm energy production and biodiversity in Ireland. The IWT met with Bord na Mona regarding the proposed midlands wind farm hub.

Habitats Under Threat

The IWT uncovered and publicly highlighted the habitat destruction occurring in Glenveagh National Park and complained to NPWS. This was taken up by RTE <http://www.rte.ie/news/player/2013/1106/20467866-irish-wildlife-trust-claims->

[large-areas-of-glenveagh-national-park-are-being-destroyed/](#)

Rothschild Report

The IWT was part of the reference group for this report being conducted by National Trusts UK and UCC and funded by the Carnegie Trust. We contributed to and consulted on the report, particularly advised on its conclusions and assisted in its publicity and publication. The report outlined and reviewed the state of 17 conservation sites that has been earmarked by conservationist Charles Rothschild over 100 years ago as potential sites as nature reserves.

Constitution Convention

We have campaigned for the inclusion of protection of the environment in the constitution including attending a number of their public meetings in November-December 2013. We created awareness for public participation through an article in the Irish Wildlife, on our Facebook page and through our E-zine. The largest amounts of submissions have been received by the Convention with regard to environmental protection but it is emerging that this is being largely ignored.

Code of Practice for Visitors of Coastal / Island Bird Colonies

We collaborated with BirdWatch Ireland to produce a code of conduct for people going to sites where there are seabird nesting colonies. This code is available on our website and is used during our events to such sites.

Pollinators

We campaigned for the ban on neonicotinoid insecticides including liaising with Marian Harkin MEP and BugLife in the UK. We wrote and challenged TD Simon Coveney to explain why Ireland had voted against the ban and urged him to vote in favour of the ban in the following vote. Ireland abstained which resulted in the European Commission intervening and installing a temporary rule to ban the insecticides for two years.

Animal Welfare Bill

We campaigned for a ban on hare coursing and fox hunting during the debate on the Animal Welfare Bill. We made a submission to the Animal Welfare Bill.

Meetings / Networking

The IWT has attended the following meetings in 2013;

- Marine Institute meeting
- Swan Plenary
- Swan AGM
- IEN Plenary
- IEN AGM
- IWT joined Agricultural working group
- IWT part of the marine working group
- IWT part of the Environment Law group
- IWT joined the Irish Environment Delegation in October that visited the European Commission, Brussels.
- Bord na Mona Meeting

Events

In 2013, the IWT attended several national events such as Bloom in the Park, Mushroom Festival in Co. Leitrim, Taste of Cavan, Rose Festival in Dublin, ClareGalway Garden Festival, Tallafest, Ireland's Eye Events, Ploughing Championships in collaboration with IEN, Native Species Weekend in Dublin Zoo. At these events, we disseminated information, gathered signatories for our Badger Petition, gained subscriptions for new members and raised the IWT profile.

The IWT held several events throughout the country as part of Biodiversity Week with some of branches holding events in the counties as part of IWT Wildwatch. The head office was working with Wicklow County Councils on wetlands awareness and provided a wetland safari and exhibition as part of the week events.

The IWT and our Branches organised and held events for Heritage Week. These consisted of different walks and talks e.g. Dr. Daniel Buckley held a Bat Walk in conjunction with Coillte.

Training and Up skilling in 2013 for staff / volunteers

- Media course with the Wheel
- Social networking course with IEN

Branches

The Irish Wildlife Trust has maintained most of our branches. Due to the economic crisis and the many young Irish ecologists and environmentally conscious have had to leave our shores in search of work; therefore our Kildare Branch has disbanded at the moment. However, with that we have gained two new branches with the opening of the Kerry Branch and Laois / Offaly Branch. The IWT now has representation in 12 counties in the Republic of Ireland. Our branches have been very busy getting involved in holding education and information talks and outings to local natural areas, actively engaging with their local authorities through different forums, participating in research e.g. MISE Otter surveys and conducting practical conservation projects such as Tree Planting in Co. Cavan and Clean Ups.

Communications

The Irish Wildlife Trust has released at least 27 press releases in 2013, many of which were then featured in our national and local newspapers. The issues raised in these press releases were in correlation to our campaigns and advocacy work in the area of Sustainable Seas Campaign, Stop Badger Culling Campaign, Turf-Cutting Scandal of Government inaction, EU policy and Government stance on Bees and use of insecticides, Habitats under threat such as highlighting Glenveagh National Park under threat. We also published our joint Code of Practice of Visitors of Coastal / Island Bird Colonies with Birdwatch Ireland.

Examples of Press Releases:

<http://www.irishexaminer.com/ireland/cull-a-serious-threat-to-badger-population-255406.html>

<http://www.thejournal.ie/ireland-badger-culling-857103-Apr2013/>

http://www.theecologist.org/News/news_analysis/1968894/wildlife_in_the_firing_line_in_global_war_against_bovine_tb.html

<http://iwt.ie/2013/04/queen-guitarist-and-the-irish-wildlife-trust-join-forces-to-save-irish-badgers/>

Radio Interviews on National and Local Radio e.g. Radio 1, Today FM, Highland Radio, Near FM, RosFM, EastCoast FM, Connemara Community Radio: Topics covered - Food Harvest, Bees, Hare Coursing, Hedge cutting, Pine martins, Squirrels, Countrywide (RTE Radio 1) Badgers, Mooney Show - Smooth Newt.

TV: Glenveagh National Park and Bogs (RTE News), Country File (BBC) regarding Badger Culling

Social Media – Facebook

The IWT Facebook presence has continued to grow with 15,447 likes from Facebook users. We have daily contributions to our page and have made a huge investment in ensuring it is engaging to the user, promotes debate and discussion and informs the public of different biodiversity news in Ireland and around the world. It has proved to be a vital tool in achieving our aims and objectives. It promotes wildlife in a very positive light through the amazing images received for our Photo of the Month and our features of Species of the Week and Silly Sunday posts.

Irish Wildlife Magazine

The IWT magazine 'Irish Wildlife' won Best Customer Magazine at the Irish Magazine Awards in December 2013. Our magazine highlights national and international conservation news, articles of current biodiversity issues, campaigns, discussion and research. It allows our readers to engage with the magazine where their enquiries are highlighted and answered and makes our members aware of events being held in different counties.

Badger Club

The Irish Wildlife Trust has produced the Badger Club supplement for our junior and school members. It has an A3 poster of species focus of Ireland's wildlife, information and activities.

IWT E-zine

The IWT produces a monthly e-zine to subscribers with information on our latest activities, environmental news and events. We currently have approx. 1,600 subscribers.

Council Focus

The IWT updated our Business Plan in 2012 – 2013 that is valid until 2015. The board of directors has been working on the objectives and will continue in 2014.

The Irish Wildlife Trust board of directors has been very busy in 2013. We have been working on our compliance with the Charity Code of Governance. We have been working closely with our auditors to improve our financial arrangements and requirements and implementing their recommendations and our new procedures and policies. We have also been updating and improving our overall policies in

relation to our governance and how we operate. The IWT was compliant on many aspects, however, many of the policies were not written into policy documents and therefore, the board has been very busy to rectify this through out 2012 / 2013. We are now fully compliant and will be signing up to the Code of Good Governance in 2014.

The IWT established a Fundraising Committee in 2013 to assist us in developing and broadening our funding avenues in order to achieve our aims and implement our Business Plan. The committee has developed a Strategic Funding Plan that will be reviewed annually and is currently engaged in implementing the different objectives of this plan. This covers areas such as general fundraising to encourage members of the public to assist in fundraising for us, corporate support, donations through websites such as idonate, text donations and other services, project and campaign funding through grant applications.

Review of 2013 funding

The IWT did not have a successful year in terms of project funding for 2013. We applied for funding to Notice Nature in collaboration with Dublin City Council but they failed. We applied for funding with Local Agenda 21 with limited success. We engaged with BITC with limited success to access funding. We have reflected on where weaknesses have occurred in our funding applications and measures have been taken to rectify these issues.

We have established a fundraising committee to seek new funding avenues. We are actively trying to diversify our funding avenues. We are actively monitoring funding applications through a procedure of internal checks and consultation.

Our online shop sales increased due to increase in sales of t-shirts in association with 'Not Guilty' Badger Campaign and new merchandise.

We had an increase in Christmas Membership Gift sales due to targeted and branded promotion via Facebook, website and Irish Wildlife.

Irish Wildlife Trust Audited Financial Statement for 2012



This document is made available at our AGM in September of each year to our members.

Registration No.: 085061

Charity No.: 006264

Irish Wildlife Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee and not having a Share Capital)

**Detailed trading profit and loss account
for the year ended 31 December 2012**

	2012		2011	
	€	€	€	€
Head Office				
Subscriptions		31,385		25,896
Sales - T-Shirts / Calendars		2,104		-
Consulting Income		5,261		12,513
Core Funding		12,114		11,501
Rental Income - Farm		11,550		10,851
Projects		42,901		66,608
Magazine Advertising		-		1,050
Donations		5,471		1,670
Other income		2,388		7,187
		<u>113,174</u>		<u>137,276</u>
Direct Costs		(3,373)		-
Head Office Expenses				
Office wages	39,769		55,327	
Employer's PRSI/NI contributions	4,133		5,417	
Rent	14,032		14,032	
Insurance	4,200		3,991	
Merchandise and signs	-		1,280	
Printing and stationery	1,878		1,840	
Advertising & Website	551		5,481	
Telephone	719		739	
Magazine Postage	1,211		1,572	
General Postage	807		1,048	
Project Expenses	9,630		6,249	
Newt Survey	8,957		8,370	
Traveling expenses	1,725		1,614	
Magazine printing	25,128		27,203	
Fees and membership expenses	398		425	
Farm Letting and Professional Fees	710		-	
Audit	2,000		2,000	
Bank charges	335		293	
General expenses	2,150		1,468	
		<u>(118,333)</u>		<u>(138,349)</u>
Contribution from Head Office		(8,532)		(1,073)
Contribution from Cork Branch		2,072		168
Contribution from Waterford Branch		254		395
Contribution from Cavan Branch		334		-
Profit / (loss) before Investment Income		<u>(5,872)</u>		<u>(846)</u>