

Take a walk on the wild side!

National Biodiversity Week events in Galway.

The first ever Irish National Biodiversity Week will run from 20th to 26th May this year. Biodiversity is short for 'biological diversity' or more simply, the variety of life on Earth. 'Biodiversity' encompasses all the different living organisms on the planet including the plants, animals as well as their habitats and their ways of life.

As this is the week to celebrate wildlife and nature, all over the country many environment groups and nature organisations will be holding events to encourage people to **'take a walk on the wild side'**.

To mark the occasion, 'People and Nature' the Galway County Biodiversity Project is helping to organise a number of activities in County Galway. All events are free of charge and all are welcome, so come along and enjoy some of the biodiversity on our doorstep at one of the following events.

International Low Tide Day - Saturday 19th May. 2pm. Spiddal Beach

People and Nature in association with Coastwatch Ireland will be celebrating International Low Tide day with a fun sea shore discovery trip. Come along and discover the secret life of rock pools. Coastwatch Ireland will officially launch the National Coastal Biodiversity Survey on the day and will be encouraging volunteers to take part by walking a stretch of coastline during the month of June and reporting their findings.

Coole Park Biodiversity Day. Sunday 20th May 2pm

The new Biodiversity of County Galway poster will be launched.

Something for all the family including children's activities, nature walks, demonstrations and information and the Biodiversity puppet show with Your Man's Puppets..

A Brazilian biologist will lead a nature walk in Portuguese for our Brazilian community.

Healing Herbs Walk in Cow Park. Saturday 26th May, 4pm. Meet at the village green, Clarinbridge

Dr Dillis Clare will lead a nature walk through the beautiful flower rich grasslands of the Cow Park and highlight some of the flowers and other plants that have traditionally been used for healing in Ireland.

Connemara National Park Biodiversity Day. Sunday 27th May.

Guided nature walk at 11am followed by family fun activities such as children's nature crafts in the afternoon. The new People and Nature summer brochure and poster will be launched by a special guest. So come along, enjoy the nature of Connemara National Park and make your own bat or bird box for your garden!

People and Nature Photo Exhibition - Loughrea Library 11th-24th May

The People and Nature photo competition was held in 2006 and attracted great deal of interest. The competition entries form an exhibition contains some stunning photographs depicting nature and wildlife in County Galway. The exhibition will visit a number of County branch libraries over the summer months and it is well worth a visit when it is in your area. The winning photographs are featured in a set of six postcards available free of charge from the Biodiversity Project manager.

Don't worry if you miss out on any of these events, the People and Nature project has a whole programme of events and activities planned throughout the summer months.

To obtain a brochure in Irish or English visit

www.galway.ie <<http://www.galway.ie/>>

or contact the project manager,

Elaine O'Riordan, Applied Ecology Unit, Centre for Environmental Science, NUI, Galway. Phone 091 493863 or email elaine.oriordan@nuigalway.ie

'People and Nature' is the theme of the Galway County Biodiversity Project. The aim of the project is to develop and implement the Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) which sets out our objectives and actions to promote, protect and enhance biodiversity in County Galway for the benefit of both people and nature.

People and Nature is a Partnership Project run between Galway County Council and NUI, Galway with the support of Galway Rural Development, The Heritage Council and the Galway County Heritage Forum.