

## Burrenbeo Trust Monthly E-Newsletter March 2009



### Spring in the Burren

The first welcome signs of Spring are now to be seen in the Burren. Hazel catkins - 'lamb's tails' - adorn the hazel bushes, while the first flowers such as the *'prima rosa'* or primrose are appearing in the undergrowth, along with yellow celandines and blue violets. Young calves, lambs and goat kids are finding their feet on the limestone, with the rock itself being brought to life by the intermittent spring showers and sunny intervals.

### World Heritage Site Nomination for the Burren - A key initiative for Govt?

The debate on the possible nomination of the Burren as a World Heritage site has continued in recent weeks with Burren-based Minister of State Tony Killeen T.D. stating that the preparation of a UNESCO World Heritage Site nomination for the Burren was a key priority for the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. The North Clare T.D. explained that Environment Minister John

Gormley was committed to developing a management plan, which would have to be undertaken as part of the nomination process for the Burren which is now on Ireland's tentative list. Other World Heritage sites include the Great Wall of China, the Great Barrier Reef, Machu Picchu in Peru and over 800 properties in 141 countries. What do you think about World Heritage Status for the Burren? - let us know on [info@burrenbeo.com](mailto:info@burrenbeo.com)

### New Research project

The Biogeoscience Research Group at the National University of Ireland, Galway (NUIG) is working on a groundwater/marine water research project which focuses on the coastal zones between Kinvarra and Ballyvaughan. The main goals of the project are to look at the extent of saltwater intrusion along the coastal regions, understand biogeochemical reactions that take place at the saltwater/freshwater interfaces, and examine the applicability of using geophysical methods to determine saltwater/freshwater interfaces.

### New Clare Branch of the Irish Wildlife Trust seeking support

The first Meeting of the Clare Branch of The Irish Wildlife Trust will take place on Wednesday, April 22<sup>nd</sup> at 8:00 PM in the Clare Educational Centre, Government Buildings, Kilrush Road, Ennis. The Speaker will be Billy Flynn, IWT Limerick Branch. For more info contact Jim Martin 087 9319459 or email: [jimmartin81@gmail.com](mailto:jimmartin81@gmail.com).

**New website launched:** [www.wildflowersofireland.net](http://www.wildflowersofireland.net) is a new website celebrating the wildflowers of Ireland.

It contains scientific descriptions and photographs of Irish plants, herbal and literary references, as well as genuine folklore of wildflowers from Ireland and further afield. It also includes a comprehensive glossary of the relevant terms together with a helpful 'In Flower Now' listing. The website has been designed for easy navigation with a plant listing, a facility for finding the flower by colour, a page which groups plants by family and a search facility for plants by month of flowering. The website has been compiled by Zoë Devlin, an Irish woman who has been passionate about wildflowers, and it is the result of a lifetime's interest in the subject. In her introduction to the website, she says: '*Conservation of our wildflowers is of the utmost importance as they are now facing threats on several different sides*' and she expresses a hope that '*through education and awareness of the diversity of our wildflowers, perhaps, just perhaps, the tide can be held back a little longer*'.

## Upcoming Burren Events

**Cliffs of Moher:** March 2009. Art and Photography Exhibition. Artists exhibiting are Doreen Drennan, Michael Hanrahan & Mona Hynes. Photographic exhibitions are from Geraldine Nagle & Christy McNamara. Atlantic Edge Ticket prices apply: 065 7086140 Email: [info@cliffsofmoher.ie](mailto:info@cliffsofmoher.ie) Web: [www.cliffsofmoher.ie](http://www.cliffsofmoher.ie)

**Corofin:** March 2<sup>nd</sup> -9<sup>th</sup>. The 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Corofin Traditional Festival: Featuring Joe Burke, Tony Linnane & Charlie Lennon, Tommy Peoples & Dermot Byrne. [www.corofintradfest.com](http://www.corofintradfest.com) Contact Padraic at 086-6070941.

**Gort:** Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> March. Tree Week Activities at Coole Park, 2- 4.30pm. Story telling with Niall de Burca, Nature games, Explore the woods, Learn about Trees & Birds, Scavenger hunts, Information. Booking is essential for the storytelling. Phone 091 631804 or email [info@coolepark.ie](mailto:info@coolepark.ie)

**Ennistymon:** Friday March 13<sup>th</sup> Australian Night in aid of Burren Chernobyl Project at the Falls Hotel. Eight course meal and a selection of top Australian wines. [www.burrenchernobyl.ie](http://www.burrenchernobyl.ie) or 065-7071130 Tickets €50 per person.

**Kinvara:** Thurs March 19<sup>th</sup>, 8pm. Burrenbeo Trust Monthly Lecture. Dr. Maria McNamara. The Geology of the Burren. With Support from the Heritage Council. Free to Trust members. Booking essential on [info@burrenbeo.com](mailto:info@burrenbeo.com)

**Lisdoonvarna:** Wed. March 25<sup>th</sup> The 60-strong Harvard Glee Club choir performing at the Pavilion Theatre. To hear the oldest male choir in the USA, contact [info@lisdoonvarnapavilion.com](mailto:info@lisdoonvarnapavilion.com) or on 086-2328257. Tickets €15 each.

**Kilnaboy:** March 18<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup> *Wise Ways* - An exhibition of artwork by visitors to Raheen Community Hospital Daycare centre is currently on show at X-PO in Kilnaboy (to March 29<sup>th</sup>). In conjunction with the exhibition, artist Terry O'Farrell will be running workshops with groups from the Kilnaboy Community during 18<sup>th</sup> -20<sup>th</sup> of March. Opening Times: Tues to Thursday: 2- 5pm. Friday: 10.30 - 12.30 (Coffee Morning) Sunday 2-5pm. Funded by IMMA and the Raheen Hospital Support Group. Tel 065 6827940 for more info.

**Burren:** April 5<sup>th</sup> Burrenbeo Trust Monthly Walk. Information on [www.burrenbeo.com](http://www.burrenbeo.com) or 091-638096

**Ennistymon:** April 17<sup>th</sup>. The Liosmorhaun Singers in concert with the Dublin Concert orchestra and the London Symphony Chorus. Venue: The Church of St. Michael, Ennistymon. This is the first ever Irish appearance of one of the world's premier choral ensembles. This event, involving more than 200 performers, will also feature Naomi O'Connell and Peter O'Donoghue. This event is being organized to celebrate the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the remarkable Lismorhaun singers Choir. Tickets cost €40. Book on 065-7077200.

**Doolin:** Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> April. The 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Walk of the Michael Dunleavy Foundation starts at the Russell Centre at 1pm. All proceeds raised are in aid of The Irish Cancer Society. Contact Mary O'Connor on 087-9080412 for details on this worthy event. Distance: 5 miles.

## Second 'FORGE AT GORT' Literary festival March 27<sup>th</sup>- 28<sup>th</sup>

The literary town of Gort, Co. Galway, will see its second 'Forge at Gort' literature festival kick off on Friday, March 27<sup>th</sup>, at Sullivan's Royal Hotel, Gort, with a reading by renowned writer, critic and poet, Ulick O'Connor. A host of novelists, poets and musicians are due for this year's festival, which is organised by the Western Writers' Centre. Among the events taking place are a performance by chair of the Irish Historical Harp Society, Siobhán Armstrong, a children's reading by Gabriel Fitzmaurice, a talk by archaeologist Michael Gibbons and recitals by poet Tim Cunningham and the Limerick White House poets. Further details of the festival can be obtained by mailing [westernwriters@eircom.net](mailto:westernwriters@eircom.net) or checking the website at [www.twwc.ie](http://www.twwc.ie) or by calling 087-2178138



**Flowering now:** Primrose (*Primula vulgaris*), Lesser celandine (*Ranunculus ficaria*), Gorse (*Ulex europaeus*).

## **Burrenbeo Trust News & Updates:**

**Monthly Walk:** The Burrenbeo Trust held the second of its monthly walks on March 1<sup>st</sup> last. Almost 60 Burren enthusiasts aged from 8 to 83 enjoyed beautiful Spring weather while visiting the farm of Michael Davoren. Michael's family have farmed this land for the past 500 years or more and he was able to give a unique insight into his land and livestock, down to the old Irish names of the fields. This was complemented by archaeologist Christine Grant who enlightened those attending on the extraordinary array of monuments on the farm, from field systems to burial mounds, including some which have been recently excavated by Christine. The next walk of the Burrenbeo Trust will take place on Sunday April 5<sup>th</sup>. For more info. on this event, please contact [info@burrenbeo.com](mailto:info@burrenbeo.com)

**Monthly Talk:** Dr. Cillian Roden delivered a fascinating discourse on the theme of 'Where does the Burren end?' to a packed house at Café Beo at the Burrenbeo Centre. Cillian, an expert on the Irish flora and a specialist in rare plants, presented a compelling argument for an extension of the traditional boundaries of the Burren to encompass areas of limestone further east, the flora of which not only matches that of the high Burren, but in some cases surpasses it. Currently these areas enjoy no legal protection and have been subject to major development pressure. The next Trust talk will be on March 19<sup>th</sup> with Dr. Maria McNamara who will discuss the geology of the Burren.

**Eco-Beo:** Four schools (Ballyvaughan, Tierneevin, Lisdoonvarna and Doolin) with over 100 enthusiastic budding Burren experts are currently working on week 4 of this 20 week course. Already the children have heard from Dr. Brendan Dunford (*A Burren Introduction*) and Dr. Maria McNamara (*Geology of the Burren*).

**Research and Advocacy:** Currently Burrenbeo are conducting an in depth study of Burren farm families regarding their vision for the future of their landscape. The study, funded by the Heritage Council and run with support of Burren IFA, is being co-ordinated by Dr. Cathy Walsh and is being administered by 4 surveyors. It is planned to hold a workshop in April to present the Study findings and to discuss them with a wider audience.

**Funding:** Burrenbeo relies on voluntary input by a number of people, coupled with resources from its membership fees which help cover external costs such as running Eco-Beo, covering office overheads etc. Burrenbeo Trust would like to acknowledge the support of the Heritage Council for its Research work and for its Walks & Talks Programme.

**Burrenbeo Resource Centre:** The Burrenbeo resource centre and Café Beo in Kinvara are now open for business, Thurs - Sat, 10am - 4pm, Sunday 12-4pm. The Resource Centre contains loads of free information on the Burren - what to do, where to go, where to stay etc. Upstairs at Café Beo, you can get the best cup of coffee in the Burren, and the best vegetarian dishes around. The Café is also a great place to get free Wi-fi and catch up on what's new in Kinvara and the Burren.



**Membership:** Membership of the Burrenbeo Trust continues to grow steadily. Join us in the Burrenbeo Trust and play your role in the protection of the Burren. Have your say in how the Burren is managed through the Trust by sending us on your opinions, or by giving us feedback on various issues. Join and your resources and support will be invested directly in local

educational initiatives, information dissemination (via our resource centre, website, factsheets etc) and consultation (e.g. with Burren farm families). You can join by calling us on (091) 638096 by e-mailing us on [info@burrenbeo.com](mailto:info@burrenbeo.com) or by visiting [www.burrenbeo.com](http://www.burrenbeo.com)



*Some Springtime scenes from the Burren - goat kids, suckler calf, lambs.*