

Burren News



A new Insight into the Burren The Burrenbeo Trust is launching its new magazine, **Burren Insight**, on 1st August in Cafebeo, Main Street, Kinvara at 7pm. All welcome. This exciting new full-colour publication celebrates the Burren, its heritage and its people. Featuring up-to-date news and events, research abstracts, photographs, quizzes, book reviews, this 1st edition features an exclusive report on the findings of a major survey recently undertaken among 110 Burren farm families. This new magazine - a first for the Burren - will be distributed free to all members of the Burrenbeo Trust and will be available to purchase for non-members at Café beo on Main Street Kinvara and at various outlets across the Burren and Ennis for €3.50. If you wish to receive a copy of Burren Insight by post or send as a gift to a friend, send the name and address plus €5 (EU only, €6 elsewhere) to the Burrenbeo Trust, Main Street, Kinvara, Co. Galway or email trust@burrenbeo.com. All proceeds go to the charitable work of the Burrenbeo Trust.

Dawn of a new era for Burren agriculture Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Brendan Smith had some rare good news for Burren farmers recently when he proposed an annual allocation of €1m per annum for the next three years for farmers engaged in conservation practices piloted under the BurrenLIFE project. The innovative project (www.burrenlife.com) which is based in Carron is currently completing its 5-year pilot phase which involved developing a detailed blueprint for farming systems in the Burren which would help protect the regions rare and valuable habitats. It is hoped that innovative livestock feeding and grazing practices piloted under BurrenLIFE will be mainstreamed across the Burren in the next phase of the scheme which is likely to begin in 2010. The BurrenLIFE project had the recent honour of being invited to address the Joint Houses of the Oireachtas Committee on Environment Heritage and Local Government where the work of this pioneering project was highly praised. See www.oireachtas.ie

New Burren Walks Launched Three new Burren walking routes were launched by Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs Éamon Ó Cuív TD on August 30th last in Ballyvaughan. Ranging from 9km to 26km, the new looped walks are the Carron Loop, the Ballyvaughan Wood Loop and the spectacular Black Head Loop. The Burren Walks Project has been further enhanced by the implementation of the recently developed Walks Scheme which works with local farmers to maintain and enhance Waymarked ways and looped walks in the area. More information on Burren walks available at www.shannonregiontrails.ie

Speaking about the Burren Walks Project, Minister Ó Cuív said: "The Walks Scheme has brought communities together in terms of development, marketing and promotion of the area and has generated a great response from tourism businesses throughout North Clare. Overall the Burren Walks Project will contribute to achieving long term and lasting economic benefits for the area."



Heritage Council call for National Landscape Act
Chairman of the Heritage Council Michael Starrett has issued a call for urgent action to protect Ireland's landscapes so that they are looked after in the best way possible, and are the subject of coherent, integrated management and planning (source: www.irishtimes.com). According to Mr. Starrett, significant progress in developing models of integrated and sustainable landscape plans are progressing around the country, including the Burren.

Referring to 'major initiatives in the Wicklow uplands, the Burren and Bere Island, featuring local community and farming initiatives' Mr. Starrett stated that 'these pilot projects are delivering in a vacuum, with no long-term legislative or structural framework to sustain them in the future'. He claimed that what we need now is a Landscape Act that will 'not stifle development, or fossilise our environment, but an Act that focuses on overall landscape planning, management and conservation.

Mr Starrett was promoting an upcoming landscape conference to be held in Tullamore this October 14th-16th and which will feature an address by Burren farm leader Michael Davoren who will speak about some developments in the Burren including work

undertaken by BurrenIFA in conjunction with the Burrenbeo Trust (findings published in Burren Insight).

See also Current Burrenbeo Trust Poll: Question: Do you think the Burren needs a new model for its management (Vote yes) or do you feel that things are fine as they stand (Vote no)? **Yes: 67%, No 33%**

Burren landscape image (above) courtesy of David Macdonald. Available at Café Beo in Kinvara. See David's online gallery of landscape photographs of the Burren, Connemara & elsewhere: www.dcmacdonaldphoto.com

Recreating Ancient Landscapes: Ancient Animal Dung Helps Botanists Unearth Burren's History

Botanists from NUI Galway have analysed fossil spores produced by fungi that grow only on herbivorous animals' dung to show how farming waxed and waned over the past 3500 years and how this shaped Burren's extraordinary plant life. Dr Ingo Feeser and Prof. Michael O'Connell collected peat and soil samples from upland areas of the Burren. "That the Burren landscape always had this lunar-like appearance is not true," says Professor O'Connell. By radiocarbon dating charcoal contained in eroded soils recovered from grykes, the NUI Galway researchers have shown that substantial loss of soil through erosion followed not only the clearing of primeval woodlands by the early farmers, i.e. the megalith tomb builders, but continued to be a feature of the Burren until well into medieval times. www.nuigalway.ie for more information.

Cliffs of Moher to be a new Natural Wonder of the World?

Congratulations to the Cliffs of Moher which has been nominated to become one of the 28 Official Finalists in the competition to become one of the new 7 natural wonders of the world. Other natural wonders rivals include the Amazon, the Great Barrier Reef, the Galapagos Islands, and the Grand Canyon.

EcoTourism Graduates: Congratulations to the 16 graduates who successfully completed the Certificate in Ecotourism awarded by Sligo IT and organized and subsidized by Responsible Tourism Skillnet and the Burren Connect Project. All the graduates are now participating on the pilot ecotourism accreditation project with Greenbox. www.burrenconnect.ie for more information on Burren Eco Tourism initiatives.

Burren Events for August 2009

Carron 2nd August. Burrenbeo Monthly Walk presents: *Myths and legends of Slievenaglasha* with local farmer and folklorist, Patrick McCormack. Meet at the Old School House, Carron at 2pm. All welcome. Free for Trust members, €5 minimum donation others. With support from The Heritage Council.

Lough Bunny 8th August. BurrenLIFE Final Summer Field Trip @11am. The field trip is entitled "Butterflies, Dragonflies and Birds at Bunny" and will take place around the shores of Lough Bunny with Geoff Hunt. It will include advice on how to attract butterflies to your garden. Please bring suitable footwear and clothing. All welcome. info@burrenlife.com / 065 708 9000 or 087 292 54 87.

Gort 9th August. The Gort show will include classes on Home and Garden Produce, Flowers, Handcrafts, Art, Photography, Poultry, Pets. Other attractions include: Side shows, raffle, children's games and stalls, Bouncy Castles, Face Painting & other Children's Entertainment & Sheaf Throwing. Displays of Local Art and Crafts and Trade Stands as well as Hot & Cold food, as well as drinks available on the day.

Kilnaboy 16th August. **Herbs Walks in the Beautiful Burren** Learn about the medicinal uses of some of the common plants that grow in the Burren. Walks take place near Mullagh More, Kilnaboy, Co. Clare and go ahead rain or shine! With Vivienne Campbell, Herbalist. Time: 2pm. Meeting at car park next to Kilnaboy Church. Cost: €10 per adult, children (and dogs!) free. Details: Call Vivienne on 086 8899168

Kinvara 21st-23rd August. The annual traditional boats festival - Cruinniu na mBad will be held in Kinvara which includes the traditional turf race from Connemara on the Friday evening, the gleoiteog races on the Saturday, and the bigger boats races on the Sunday. Local musicians Paul Mulligan and John Faulkner play a concert entitled *Songs of the Sea* at Johnston's Hall on the festival closing night.

Cliffs of Moher 22nd-30th August. "Surfing Giants" a surfing exhibition showcasing the famous Cliffs of Moher Wave called "Aileens" The exhibition will take place in Atlantic Edge Exhibition open every day from 09.00am. Throughout the month of August, book tickets online and save over 15% on www.cliffsofmoher.ie Kids go free after 6.00pm with paying adult; reduced facilities charge after 7.30pm - €5.00 per car. Cliffs of Moher Sea Bird Identification Cards is on sale for €1.95.

Kinvara 22nd August. Burrenbeo Heritage Week for Kids presents: *Paint'n'draw the Burren* with Gordon Darcy. Meet at the Burrenbeo Information Centre, Main Street, Kinvara at 11am-1230pm. This is a great opportunity for kids of all ages to learn to sketch and draw the wildlife of the Burren with reknowned Burren expert Gordon D'Arcy. This has a €5 charge per child for materials etc.

Fanore 26th August. Heritage Mid-week Walk presents: *Fanore Beach And Its Environs - The Geology And Anything Else We Can Find!* with Martin McKeown and Brigid Barry. Please meet at Fanore Beach carpark at 4pm or at the Burrenbeo Trust Information Centre at 3.30pm to carpool. €5 donation.

Carron 27th August. Burrenbeo Heritage Week Talk presents: *'Archaeological Excavations In Glencurran Cave, The Burren: Bronze Age Ritual, Early Medieval Settlement, Viking Necklaces And Ancient DNA.'* with Dr. Marion Dowd. Michael Cusack Centre, Carron at 8.30pm. €5 donation.

Fanore 29th August. Heart Charity Croi are holding a Burren walk and raise valuable funds for the charity. The Burren Walking Club will organise a fun day out on gentle hill terrain with a choice of three distances ranging from 9-15 miles. Registration 10am at the recreational area in Fanore.

Blackhead 30th August. Heritage Weekend Walk presents: *Finding Flowers and Ferns on Blackhead* with Dr Stephen Ward. Meet at Murroughtoohy Layby OS sheet 51 N14.7 W 10.7 Find layby by Blackhead, north of Fanore Beach on R477 at 2pm. Free for members, €5 donation for non-members.

Other Activities: Sea Kayaking Tuesday August 4th at 6pm (20 euros, U18s 15 euros. Meet at Kinvara pier. Age 10 years and up. All special equipment provided. Call the BOEC at 065 7078066 or email burroec@eircom.net... ..Paint the Flaggy Shore with artist Frank Sanford! Demonstration day for painting enthusiasts Saturday 8th and 15th August. Oil or watercolour, bring your own material.



Burrenbeo Trust News & Updates

Patrons: Our warmest congratulations to Burrenbeo Trust Patrons Michael Longley who turned 70 recently, and Bishop William Walsh who announced his upcoming retirement. We wish both of these great men health and happiness in the years ahead during which we hope to see more of them in the Burren.

BURREN INSIGHT 1st Edition - Come join us for the launch at Burrenbeo, Main Street, Kinvara @ 7pm on August 1st or order your 1st edition copy on trust@burrenbeo.com (€5 EU only, €6 elsewhere).

Walk with us, every Wednesday in August. A guided Introduction to the Burren walk every Wednesday. Meet at the Burrenbeo Centre, Main Street, Kinvara at 3.30pm to carpool. All welcome. €5 donation.

Trust's Monthly Walk: The next Burrenbeo Trust monthly walk will take place on Sunday 2nd August with Patrick McCormack on the Myths and Legends of Slievenaglasa. Patrick is an organic farmer with an intimate knowledge of, and burning passion for, the Burren. Please meet at the Old School House in Carron. Info on trust@burrenbeo.com or 091 638096. July's walk was led by Gordon D'Arcy. Though a wet day, it was an enjoyable introduction to the rich flora and fauna of Garryland wood.

Trust's Monthly Talk: Dr Marion Dowd 'Archaeological Excavations in Glencurran Cave, The Burren: Bronze Age Ritual, Early Medieval Settlement, Viking Necklaces And Ancient DNA. 'Michael Cusack Centre, Carron at 8.30pm. Members free, €5 donation for non-members. July's talk featured botanist Dr Grace O'Donovan who gave an entertaining insight into some of the (mad) botanists that have studied in the Burren.

Why not volunteer? The Burrenbeo Trust is currently putting together a list of people that would be interested in volunteering out in the Burren for an afternoon. If you would like to register your interest please email trust@burrenbeo.com and we can let you know about upcoming volunteer events.

Burrenbeo Trust Resource Centre: The Burrenbeo resource centre and Café Beo in Kinvara are now open Tuesday - Sunday, 11am to 6pm. The Resource Centre contains loads of free information on the Burren - and acts as an office base for Trust Communications officer Brigid Barry.

Café Beo: This is upstairs to the Burrenbeo Trust Resource Centre. It has the same opening hours as Burrenbeo Trust Offices. On Mondays there is now a movie for kids at Midday. For €9 you can see the movie, have a drink (juice/milk for kids, and tea/coffee for adults) and a cupcake. Everyone welcome.

Website: www.burrenbeo.com continues to grow with over 20,000 unique visitors for July 2009

Tweets: You can also get updates from the Burrenbeo Trust by following us on www.twitter.com

Media: The Trust features in a piece in the current edition of Cara Magazine (Aer Lingus in-flight mag)

Farewell to Maria! Burrenbeo Trust would like to wish Dr. Maria MacNamara of the Burren Geopark Project every success in her future career at Yale University. Maria, who greatly entertained Trust members with her Walk and Talk in Spring, and who helped with the Geology Module of Eco-Beo, will be sorely missed.

Join the Trust! This e-newsletter is a free resource to friends of Burrenbeo Trust, but to become more involved in playing your role in the protection of the Burren, why not join us in the Burrenbeo Trust? Become a member of this non-profit charity and your resources and support will be invested directly in local educational initiatives (EcoBeo programme), information dissemination (via our resource centre, website, factsheets etc) and consultation on the sustainable future of the Burren (e.g. with Burren farm families). When you join as a member you receive an exclusive pack including a copy of Burren Insight, an award-winning CDR with over 200 images of plants and features that you would find in the Burren, a subscription to the biannual magazine Burren Insight, Burren postcards, free entry into the Trust's monthly walks and talks and more. Join us: 091-638096, trust@burrenbeo.com

