



Peat Crossing Borderlines

The Dutch-Irish Save the Bogs Story



Celebrating International Year of Cultural Heritage in Kildare, Westmeath and Meath

Programme

28th July 2018 - Saturday evening at the Bog of Allen Nature Centre 7.30pm-10.30pm

- 7.30pm Welcome from Mr Sean Power, Mayor of Kildare and reception at the Bog of Allen Nature Centre
 - 8.00pm All things Dutch and Irish from His Excellency Peter Kok, the Netherlands Ambassador to Ireland
 - 8.15pm Saving Irish Bogs: Our Story, Our Future from Dr Catherine O'Connell, Chief Executive Officer, Irish Peatland Conservation Council
 - 8.30pm "Peat Crossing Borderlines" from invited keynote speaker Prof Matthijs Schouten from the Dutch Foundation for Conservation of Irish Bogs
 - 9.30pm Bats and Swifts Nature Demonstration with Anna Collins from Kildare Bat Group and Tom McCormack from Kildare BirdWatch
-

The **Bog of Allen Nature Centre** was established by the Irish Peatland Conservation Council in 2003

when the premises were purchased from Teagasc. Originally this centre was the Peatland Research Station. Many experiments were carried out here on the horticultural use of peat in the commercial production of vegetables. In addition the famous peatland scientist Dr Bob Hammond who compiled the 1979 Peatland Distribution Map of Ireland was based here. The establishment of the Bog of Allen Nature Centre by IPCC was supported by: Kildare County Council, Irish Environmental Network, The Dutch Foundation for Conservation of Irish Bogs, Department of the Environment, HDH Wills 1965 Charitable Trust, Kildare Leader, Flogas, Offaly County Council and many private individuals. Since moving to Kildare IPCC have built the centre as



a hub for peatland education, conservation and research. In addition to the Nature Centre, we own and manage a network of five peatland reserves across the country, in counties Kildare, Meath, Kerry and Waterford. The IPCC is a registered charity with five staff and many volunteers who are responsible for running the Save the Bogs Campaign.

Sunday 29th July 2018 Bog Tour

9.30am: Meeting at the Bog of Allen Nature Centre two coaches will be provided to take participants on a one day excursion to demonstrate the strong interconnections between Irish and Dutch peatland scientists and to take part in conversations about conserving Irish bogs and promoting their cultural importance.

11.00am: Site Visit 1: Scragh Bog, Co. Westmeath: this was the first of three bogs purchased by the Dutch people and donated as a gift to the Irish Nation to demonstrate Dutch sincerity in the need



to protect peatlands. It is a wonderful example of a fen habitat. It is located in a valley and has a wealth of species and habitats that have become increasingly rare as bogs and fens have been drained and used for other purposes. The site is in pristine condition and needs little or no management. Visitors will access the site via a boardwalk and will meet a representative from the National Parks and Wildlife Service who are the custodians of this National Nature Reserve. Highlights of the visit will be to see Fen Woodland habitat and the rare Wintergreen plant (*Pyrola rotundifolia*).

1.00pm Lunch at Causey Farm, Co. Meath. Welcome from Cathaoirleach Tom Kelly, Meath County Council.

2.00pm Site Visit 2: Girley Bog, Co. Meath: this site was partially purchased by the Irish Peatland Conservation Council with 50% funding from the Dutch Foundation for Conservation of Irish Bogs. It is being managed for nature conservation by a community-based stakeholder group called Girley Bog Meitheal. At the site visitors will see and discuss techniques being used to restore raised bog habitat including drain blocking, Sphagnum moss transfer restoration of bare peat areas (see photo inset of area restored in 2015 and how it appears in 2018) and monitoring of hydrology. There will be a demonstration of the biodiversity of aquatic life in bog pools.



4.30pm Return to the Bog of Allen Nature Centre to arrive by 5.30pm

Further information about the Dutch Irish Save the Bogs Campaign and about Girley Bog available at www.ipcc.ie

This event is being supported by Kildare County Council, Meath County Council, Westmeath County Council and Creative Ireland as part of the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018

