

Welcome to The Bog of Allen Museum Trail

Telling the story of Ireland's peatlands



The Traditional Irish Cottage

There is a deep connection between Irish people and peatlands. For over 400 years people have been cutting turf from the bogs and burning it to heat their homes. The turf fire was the heart of the home. As well as heat, it had many other uses such as light, cooking and social gatherings.



Cutting turf with a sleán (slane)

The traditional tool used to cut peat sods from the bog. Did you know?.... Turf comes in different colours, it can be white, brown, dark brown and black. This difference in colour depends on how far from the surface of the bog the turf has been cut. Turf cut from the surface of the bog is younger, less compact and is a lighter shade and weight. It burns quickly.



Bogs are like living history books

Bogs are made from water and partially decomposed vegetation that have accumulated over 10,000 years. Bogs grow by 1mm per year which means 1m depth cut into the peat represents 1,000 years. The history of an area is locked in the layers of peat in the bog. Did you know?.... Peatlands cover only 3% of the world's terrestrial surface but they store 2/3 of the world's terrestrial carbon.



Bogs are beautiful and unique habitats for wildlife

Bogs are fed by rainfall and have a low pH value which means they are acidic. Very few nutrients are available for growth. The peat is water logged. Life is challenging in these unique habitats which are home to a very well adapted community of plants and animals. Did you know?.... You will not find rabbits living on the bog as the peat is too wet for them to create their burrows, however, the Irish hare can live happily on the bog as it makes it home on the bog surface. Did you know?.... Bog cotton is one of the most beautiful plants of Irish bogs and its fibres have been used to make cloth.



The Bog Larder

Bogs have amazing preserving powers. The lack of oxygen in the peaty soils prevents decay. This allows objects buried in the bogs to be excellently preserved. Bog butter is a very good example of this. Many people would bury their butter in the bog to keep it fresh, some maybe forgetting where they had buried it!! 100's of years later this butter is found, very well preserved. Did you know?..... Over 100 bodies have been found in Irish bogs, some dating back to 290 BC.





Peatlands - an inspiration for generations

The open, rugged and beautiful wilderness of Ireland's peatlands have for years inspired the work of artists, sculptors, musicians and poets. Did you know?.... Seamus Heaney the famous Irish poet had a love for Ireland's peatlands and was a huge supporter of the work of the IPCC.



IPCC's Save the Bogs Campaign

The Irish Peatland Conservation Council's mission is to conserve a representative sample of Ireland's peatlands for future generations to enjoy. The IPCC is an environmental NGO and a registered charity so we depend on fundraising and the support of our Friends of the Bog to carry out our work.

Did you know?..... €4.05 million has been spent on the Save the Bogs Campaign by IPCC since 1987 - all of which was donated by members of the public! Thank You so much.



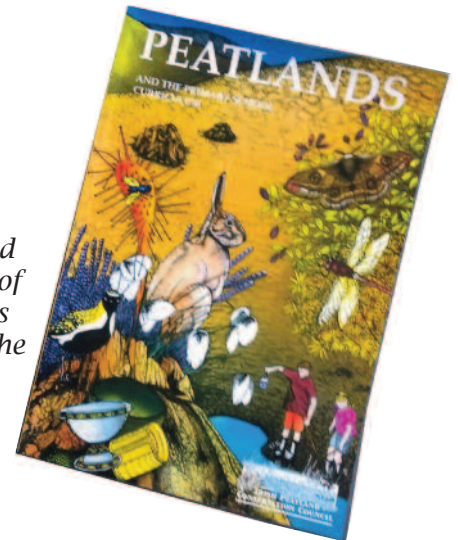
IPCC work to restore bog habitats

Today almost half of all our peatlands have been cut away. When bogs are to be cut for turf, they are drained. Lowering water levels in the bog creates unsuitable conditions for Sphagnum moss (the bog building or peat forming moss) to grow. IPCC restore damaged bogs by blocking drains with plastic dams. This action restores the wetness in the bog which the special wildlife need to survive.



IPCC's Peatlands Education Programme

Educating children and adults about the history, formation, wildlife and the ecosystem services provided by peatlands is a very important part of the work of the Irish Peatland Conservation Council. Many class groups visit the Bog of Allen Nature Centre where they can experience life in the bog and do projects to deepen their understanding.



Donate today and help Save Ireland's Bogs



The IPCC need your help. Your donation will help fund the Save the Bogs Campaign to conserve and restore Ireland's wonderful and unique peatland habitats. You can also donate through our website www.ipcc.ie Did you know?..... For just €27 you can join the IPCC's Friends of the Bog and add your voice to the Save the Bogs Campaign.