

Biodiversity Awareness Training for Community Groups Wexford Sept/Oct 2021 – Learning Outcomes & Course Plan

The programme will be delivered by  & Deborah D'Arcy, Ecologist on behalf of Wexford LCDC.

Learning Outcomes

After attending the training, participants will be able to:

- Explain the importance of biodiversity and the conservation of habitats and species;
- Recognise habitats and features that are important for biodiversity;
- Research, plan and undertake specific actions for biodiversity conservation and enhancement in their village/community;
- Source relevant information and advice to plan and develop biodiversity projects;
- Plan biodiversity awareness events in their community;
- Relate wildlife and conservation legislation to their community projects; and
- Appreciate the benefits of a partnership approach.

Module 1 & 4 are classroom based days. There are two location/date options for these:

- Kilcannon Garden Centre, Enniscorthy: Friday 10th September & Saturday 16th October
9.00am - 4.30pm
OR
- Knockingall Organisation Community Centre, Piercestown (Scout Hall), Wexford: Saturday 11th September & Friday 15th October 9.00am - 4.30pm

Module 1 Theory workshop 1

Introduction to Biodiversity, Ecosystem services and Habitat mapping (2 workshops of 30 participants each;

Morning session

9.00-9.30	Registration
9.30-11.00	Biodiversity in County Wexford; Biodiversity around us in local areas; Ecosystem services
11.00-11.30	Break for refreshments and networking
11.30-12.30	Recognising, identifying and mapping/recording habitats and species
12.30 -1.30	Lunch

Afternoon Session

1.30-2.30	Short field trip around/within walking distance of venue to identify and explore habitats
2.30-4.00	Classroom: Actions for Biodiversity; Biodiversity Enhancement and Best-practice Habitat Management.
4.00-4.30	Outline of assignment tasks. Feedback and wrap-up.

Module 2 Field trip

Each participant will attend a practical field study trip to discover and explore at least two different ecosystems. A maximum number of 15 participants per field trip will apply. Participants will be asked to list the field trips in order of preference at application stage. 1st choice locations are not guaranteed:

- **Option 1:** The Raven Nature Reserve SAC Friday 17th September; features of interest include coastal dunes, plantation forestry on dunes, wetlands (ponds, swamp), wintering birds, breeding terns and rare plants.
- **Option 2:** Carrigfoyle Quarry and Jamestown Nature Reserve, Oylegate Saturday 18th September; features of interest include upland heath/rocky habitat/River Slaney/woodland and farmland biodiversity.
- **Option 3:** Tintern Abbey and surrounding area Friday 24th September; features of interest include woodlands, streams, niche habitats (graveyards, stone walls) grasslands and Bannow Bay SAC/SPA (estuaries, saltmarsh, wintering birds).
- **Option 4:** Ballyteige Burrow SAC/SPA Saturday 25th September; features of interest include coastal habitats, dunes, saltmarsh, rare plants and wintering birds.

Module 3 Participants' assignment (to be conducted by participants in their own time over a number of weeks; group working is encouraged)

There will be two parts to the assignment, a mapping task and a biodiversity task.

Task 1: Habitat Mapping

Participants will be asked to map habitats in their local area to a broad level (for example, woodland, grassland, river, hedgerow), and to research the biodiversity in their area using freely available online resources. This will involve the participants working in their community groups, to do the following:

- Select their study area
- Map their study area, using freely available online mapping resources or by hand;
- Identify and mark on the map any streams, hedgerows, stone walls, woodland, coastal habitats, amenity grasslands, agricultural land (pasture and arable), urban/built land;
- These habitat maps will form the basis for work in Module 4.

Task 2: Identification of biodiversity hot-spots and cold-spots

- Look at their area and consider where biodiversity "hot-spots" are – these are the areas that need to be preserved and protected;
- Look at where biodiversity "cold-spots" are, i.e. where biodiversity is lacking and how it could be improved;
- Consider where biodiversity is evident and how it could be supported.

Module 4 Theory/practical workshop 2: Biodiversity Protection Plans

Morning session

9.00-9.30 Registration

9.30-11.30 Biodiversity Protection Planning; Working in groups, participants will use a template plan to start planning projects and protective actions for their local areas, using the information that they gathered on their assignments

11.00-11.30 Refreshment break for networking

11.30-12.30 Partnerships and implementation; sources of funding

12.30-1.30 *Lunch*

Afternoon session

1.30-2.30 Walkabout to explore local habitats in venue and discuss habitat management techniques/options

2.30-4.00 Classroom: Complete Biodiversity Protection Plans with guidance and facilitation from tutors

4.00-4.30 Where to from here? From planning to action; Implementation, monitoring, evaluation and follow-up

4.30-5.00 Course evaluation and wrap-up session

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