



Comhairle Contae  
Fhine Gall  
Fingal County  
Council



# FINGAL BIODIVERSITY



August - November  
2024 Events  
Programme



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  - 5 **Howth Coastal Walk with Shane's Howth Adventures** **€19.50** (after disc.)
  - 6 **Bat Walk with Brian Keeley** (Bat Conservation Ireland) **FREE**
  - 6 **Royal Canal Kayaking, Lucan with Jenny Kilbride** (Kayaking.ie) **€35** (off reg. price)
  - 7 **Howth Maritime Festival with Fingal County Council** **FREE**
  
  - 8 **Take a Walk on the Wild Side... Biodiversity Walk & Talk with Hans Visser / The Bleeding Pig Cultural Festival** **FREE**
  - 8 **Wild Time - Crazy Play with OWLS** **FREE**
  - 9 **Community Update with Howth SAAO** **FREE**
  - 10 **Otter Study: Fingal Rivers with Ross Macklin** (Triturus Environmental Limited) **FREE**
  - 10 **Howth Safari with Shane's Howth Adventures** **€24.50** (after disc.)
  - 11 **Fingal Fungus Festival with Howard Fox & Maria Cullen** **FREE**
  - 11 **Witches and Wizards with OWLS** **FREE**
  - 12 **Otter Study: Fingal Rivers with Ross Macklin** (Triturus Environmental Limited) **FREE**
  - 12 **Native Flat Oyster (*Ostrea Edulis*) Restoration with Brian Rice** (Paul Brooks Lab, UCD) (Herpetological Society of Ireland) **FREE**
  - 13 **Staying Warm - Survival Event with OWLS** **FREE**



## INTRODUCTION

*Welcome to the Fingal Biodiversity Events programme for August - November 2024.*

We have a wide range of walks, talks and webinars throughout the county on offer.

We are kicking off our autumn events programme with a range of outings for Heritage Week. We are starting with a guided ecology walk of Robswalls Park in Malahide, a Reptile Ramble on Howth and a Bat Walk in Racecourse Park, Baldoyle. If you like being active, why not join us for a kayaking excursion on the Royal Canal with Kayaking.ie, go on a Safari in Howth with Shanes Howth Adventures or go and see Dublin Bay by boat with Dublin Bay Cruises?

If you want to learn more about Butterflies or Mushrooms, why not join us on the 21st August and 24th-25th October in Newbridge Demesne or join us in Turvey Nature Park for an ecology walk under the expert guidance of Fingal's Biodiversity Officer. We will also have webinars coming up on an Otter Study of the Fingal Rivers and a native Oyster restoration project in Dublin Bay.

And finally, we have outings for the little ones too, where OWLS is organising a series of family outings in the Turvey Nature Park in Donabate.

We look forward to seeing you at one of our outings! If you have any suggestions and ideas for walks, talks or events, please get in contact with us on [biodiversity@fingal.ie](mailto:biodiversity@fingal.ie).



## EVENT TIMETABLE

EVENT	DATE	LOCATION	TIME
<b>AUGUST</b>			
Ecology Walk	17 <sup>th</sup>	Robswall Park	12:00pm - 1:00pm
Howth Reptile Ramble	18 <sup>th</sup>	East Mountain, Howth	10:00am - 4:00pm
Discover the Wild	19 <sup>th</sup> - 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Turvey Nature Reserve	9:30am - 2:30pm
Learn About Butterflies	21 <sup>st</sup>	Newbridge House & Farm	10:00am - 2:00pm
Dublin Bay Biosphere Tour from Howth	21 <sup>st</sup>	West Pier, Howth Harbour	2:00pm - 4:00pm
Howth Coastal Walk	22 <sup>nd</sup>	Howth	12:00pm - 3:00pm
Bat Walk	24 <sup>th</sup>	Racecourse Park, Baldoyle	8:00pm - 9:30pm
Royal Canal Kayaking, Lucan	25 <sup>th</sup>	Leixlip, Co. Kildare	10:00am - 12:30pm
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>			
Howth Maritime Festival	7 <sup>th</sup> - 8 <sup>th</sup>	Howth	12:00pm - 5:00pm
Take a Walk on the Wild Side... Biodiversity Walk & Talk	22 <sup>nd</sup>	Turvey Nature Reserve	11:00am
Wild Time - Crazy Play	22 <sup>nd</sup>	Turvey Nature Reserve	1:00pm - 3:00pm
<b>OCTOBER</b>			
Community Update with Howth SAAO	8 <sup>th</sup>	Howth Yacht Club	7:00pm - 9:00pm
Otter Study: Fingal Rivers	16 <sup>th</sup>	Online Webinar	1:00pm - 2:00pm
Howth Safari	20 <sup>th</sup>	Howth	11:00am - 3:00pm
Fingal Fungus Festival	24 <sup>th</sup> - 25 <sup>th</sup>	Newbridge House & Farm	10:00am - 4:00pm
Witches and Wizards	27 <sup>th</sup>	Turvey Nature Reserve	1:00pm - 3:00pm
<b>NOVEMBER</b>			
Otter Study: Fingal Rivers	7 <sup>th</sup>	Skerries or Rush (Venue TBC)	8:00pm - 9:00pm
Native Flat Oyster ( <i>Ostrea Edulis</i> ) Restoration	15 <sup>th</sup>	Online Webinar	1:00pm - 2:00pm
Staying Warm - Survival Event	23 <sup>rd</sup>	Turvey Nature Reserve	10:00am - 12:00pm

**17**  
AUG.

## ECOLOGY WALK with ALEXIS FITZGERALD (FitzGerald Ecology)

*12:00pm - 1:00pm at Robswall Park, Malahide/Portmarnock*

Come along with ecologist Alexis FitzGerald on a guided tour of Robswall Park, exploring the species-rich semi-natural calcareous grasslands and hedgerows on site. We may also spot some interesting birds in the area and get a nice view of Lambay Island (if the weather permits!). This is an outdoor event that involves walking around low, grassy hills. The ground may be uneven at times, so it may not be suitable for wheelchair users and others with limited mobility. Wear comfortable clothes and shoes suited to light walking and the most likely weather on the day.

We will assemble for the walk at the Paddy's Hill Car Park, near the Portmarnock AFC (D13 WW06). The event is suitable for all ages, but children must be accompanied by an adult. This event is free and requires no advance registration.



**18**  
AUG.

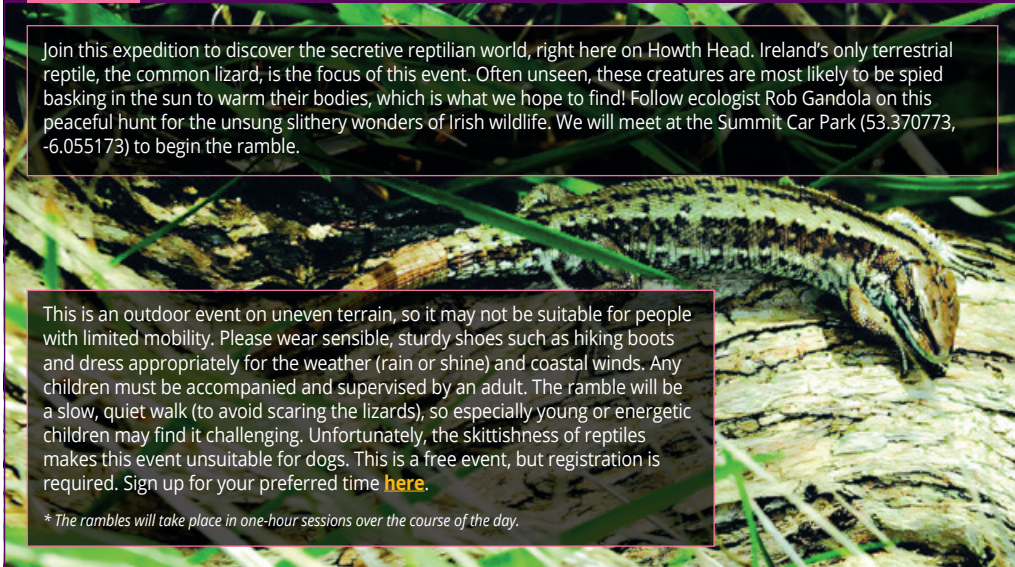
## HOWTH REPTILE RAMBLE with ROB GANDOLA (Herpetological Society of Ireland)

*10:00am - 4:00pm\* at East Mountain, Howth*

Join this expedition to discover the secretive reptilian world, right here on Howth Head. Ireland's only terrestrial reptile, the common lizard, is the focus of this event. Often unseen, these creatures are most likely to be spied basking in the sun to warm their bodies, which is what we hope to find! Follow ecologist Rob Gandola on this peaceful hunt for the unsung slithery wonders of Irish wildlife. We will meet at the Summit Car Park (53.370773, -6.055173) to begin the ramble.

This is an outdoor event on uneven terrain, so it may not be suitable for people with limited mobility. Please wear sensible, sturdy shoes such as hiking boots and dress appropriately for the weather (rain or shine) and coastal winds. Any children must be accompanied and supervised by an adult. The ramble will be a slow, quiet walk (to avoid scaring the lizards), so especially young or energetic children may find it challenging. Unfortunately, the skittishness of reptiles makes this event unsuitable for dogs. This is a free event, but registration is required. Sign up for your preferred time [here](#).

*\* The rambles will take place in one-hour sessions over the course of the day.*





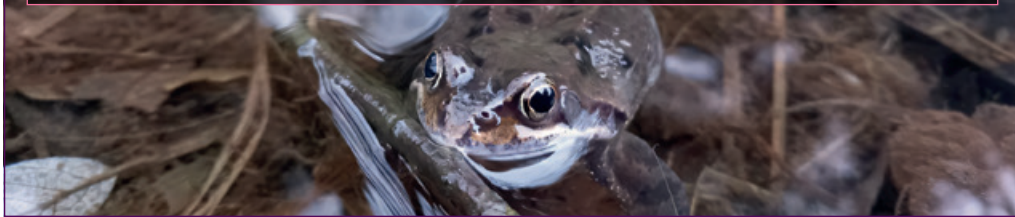
**19-23**  
AUG.

## DISCOVER THE WILD: A NATURE-BASED AWARENESS CAMP with OWLS

*9:30am - 2:30pm at Turvey Nature Reserve, Donabate*

OWLS (Outdoor, Wildlife, Learning and Survival) children's nature charity will be leading this event, suitable for primary school children (ages 7+ only) with a keen interest in learning about wildlife and their habitats through a hands-on approach. We will be looking at different forms of nature each day to learn about our native insects, mammals, ponds, grasslands and woodlands and how to observe them respectfully. We will also be doing practical projects to support their conservation and habitat, such as building bird and bat boxes and planting hedges. The camp will take place outdoors in a natural setting, giving us a chance to experience and appreciate the different habitats, plants and animals at Turvey.

Please note that while the activities involved will be fun, the camp is not a regular children's game week and is not appropriate for very young children (6 and under) due to the focus and coordination involved. This event requires registration. Please contact: [info@owls.ie](mailto:info@owls.ie) using the headline '**Public Event Booking**' with the event(s) you wish to join, your family name and how many people will be attending. Attendance costs are €5 per child per day (€25 per child for the whole week). Attend for the week or just the odd day.



**21**  
AUG.

## LEARN ABOUT BUTTERFLIES with JESMOND HARDING (Butterfly Conservation Ireland)

*10:00am - 2:00pm at Newbridge House & Farm, Donabate*

Jesmond Harding, Ireland's leading butterfly expert, will present an illustrated talk on Ireland's butterflies in Newbridge Farm followed by a walk through the demesne to search for butterflies. Butterflies and moths make up about 9-10% of all life found on the planet. Learn how butterflies develop, why butterflies matter, how to identify Ireland's butterflies, the habitats they need and how you can attract butterflies to your garden. The park has some good habitats for butterflies and weather and season permitting, we should be able to find and identify the area's butterflies.

The event is suitable for people of all ages and will last approximately 4 hours, starting off with an introductory presentation on identifying butterflies (10-12), followed by a lunch break (12-12:30) before the butterfly walk (12:30-2). Join for the talk, the walk or both. The walk is mainly through grassland and does not involve strenuous activity, but do wear comfortable clothing and footwear. Please bring a packed lunch for the break, or you may buy lunch at the café at Newbridge. Jesmond will have copies of his book on Ireland's butterflies available at a reduced price. This is a free event, but booking is required. Please contact Jesmond Harding by email ([jesmondharding@gmail.com](mailto:jesmondharding@gmail.com)) to register.



**21**  
AUG.

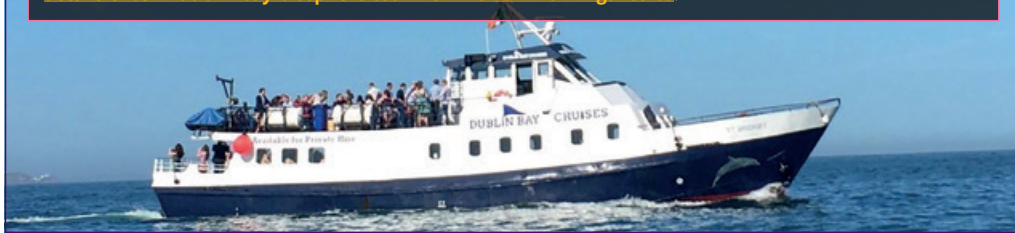
## DUBLIN BAY BIOSPHERE TOUR FROM HOWTH with DUBLIN BAY CRUISES

*2:00pm - 4:00pm at West Pier, Howth Harbour*



Discover amazing Dublin Bay on a Biosphere Discovery Tour this summer! Dublin Bay is internationally recognised for its fascinating natural and cultural heritage and has recently been designated as a UNESCO Biosphere. Join us on this special Biosphere Cruise from Howth - See the incredible bird colonies of Ireland's Eye and the majestic Howth Cliffs before rounding the Baily Lighthouse to view and learn about the nature and ecology of the Dublin Bay Biosphere. Return to Howth.

The tour boat will berth at the end of the West Pier in Howth, with passengers embarking and disembarking in front of Aqua Restaurant. There is a full heated indoor cabin that you can enjoy if it rains but we do recommend bringing a waterproof jacket also. The boat is currently not wheelchair accessible. Contact [biodiversity@fingal.ie](mailto:biodiversity@fingal.ie) if you wish to discuss accessibility concerns related to this event. There will be a bar/snack bar on board serving tea, coffee and soft drinks as well as beer, wine, cider and prosecco should you wish to purchase refreshments during the cruise. **BOOKING REQUIRED:** €12.50 per person. Book online at <https://dublinbaycruises.rezgo.com/details/370347/dublin-bay-biosphere-tour-from-howth-with-fingal-co-co>.



**22**  
AUG.

## HOWTH COASTAL WALK with SHANE'S HOWTH ADVENTURES

*12:00pm - 3:00pm at Howth*



Explore the charming harbour and historic picturesque coastal village with Shane's Howth Adventures through the eyes of a Howth native guide, sharing their unique insight. See local landmarks like St. Mary's Abbey, Baily Lighthouse and the Martello towers, follow secret paths and trails through woodlands and heath and hopefully spot wildlife like seabirds, seals, dolphins and porpoises.

Walk through time in the footsteps of an astonishing history, enjoying the breathtaking views on the 3-hour, 8km Howth cliff walking tour. We recommend cross trainers, boots or stout shoes and light weight long trousers to avoid nettle stings. Light waterproof, gloves, scarf and hat in a backpack may also be useful, depending on the weather. Bring along water and a snack to enjoy enroute.



Meet at 12:00pm by Bodega Coffee at Howth Market, across the road from the train station. **BOOKING REQUIRED:** €19.50 per person (50% of normal price). Reserve places online at [shaneshowthadventures.com](http://shaneshowthadventures.com).



**24**  
AUG.

## BAT WALK with BRIAN KEELEY (Bat Conservation Ireland)

*8:00pm - 9:30pm at Racecourse Park, Baldoye*

Curious about bats? Know all about them but can't get enough? Just looking for something to do on a Saturday night? Join ecologist Brian Keeley on a nighttime outing to explore the enigmatic world of bats, supported by Baldoye Wild Towns. Though mostly unseen and often misunderstood, bats are highly dynamic creatures who spend their nights hunting for insects which they can eat by the thousands in a single evening. Using bat detectors, we will be able to hear who is prowling the night skies and talk about Ireland's bat species: what makes them different from each other, what ecological services they provide and more.

This event is suitable for people of all ages (bedtime permitting, of course) and a great way for children to learn more about wildlife. Walking will be light and the estate is wheelchair-accessible, but the ground may be uneven at times. Wear comfortable shoes and clothing and consider bringing a jacket in case it gets cold. As bats are far less active in poor weather, the walk may be cancelled in case of rain. This is a free event and no registration is required. Meet at the entrance to the Baldoye Racecourse Community Garden, off Red Arches Road (<https://maps.app.goo.gl/arZbHu6Mze5y9p3j9>).



**25**  
AUG.

## ROYAL CANAL KAYAKING, LUCAN with JENNY KILBRIDE (Kayaking.ie)

*10:00am - 12:30pm at Leixlip, Co. Kildare*

Experience this tranquil and breathtaking oasis of nature by kayak, only a stone's throw from Dublin, along the Royal Canal Blueway. This guided tour is a relaxing and gentle kayak excursion on very calm water through the historic section of canal just outside Leixlip, Confey. Tours leave from the Royal Canal Amenity Group Centre in Leixlip, Co. Kildare.



This is a beginner's event, but attendees must be comfortable on the water and able to paddle their own kayaks. This is an outdoor event; there may be strong sunlight or rain (or both). No children under 14 permitted. All equipment provided. Bring something to wear under a wetsuit and old runners or water shoes that you don't mind getting wet. Meet at the Royal Canal Amenity Group, R149, Confey, Leixlip, Co. Kildare. **BOOKING REQUIRED:** Register at <https://kayaking.ie/royal-canal-kayaking-dublin> using the code **FINGALCOCO** for €35 off of the regular price.



**7-8  
SEPT.****HOWTH MARITIME & SEAFOOD FESTIVAL**  
with **FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL***12:00pm - 5:00pm in Howth*

## Dive into Howth in 2024!

Get ready for a splash of excitement as the **Howth Maritime & Seafood Festival** sails into the picturesque fishing village of Howth in the summer of 2024.



Dive into Howth in 2024! Get ready for a splash of excitement as the Howth Maritime & Seafood Festival sails into the picturesque fishing village of Howth in the summer of 2024. This is your invitation to a fantastic weekend filled with everything you love - from seafood to free family fun and toe-tapping live music - all while supporting our beloved local businesses. The Biodiversity Unit will be there to share the wilder side of Howth with you through games, interesting facts and show-and-tell with actual, living residents of Howth's marine and freshwater habitats.

Join us as we come together to celebrate the essence of Howth - its rich maritime history, the flavours of the sea, and the warmth of its community. Don't miss out on this extraordinary seaside celebration! This Event is run by the Events Unit in Fingal County Council.



**22  
SEPT.****TAKE A WALK ON THE WILD SIDE... BIODIVERSITY  
WALK & TALK with HANS VISSER / THE BLEEDING PIG  
CULTURAL FESTIVAL***11:00am at Turvey Nature Reserve, Donabate*

Join Fingal County Council's Biodiversity Officer, Hans Visser, for a biodiversity walk and talk in and around Turvey Nature Reserve as part of the Bleeding Pig Cultural Festival.

The nature reserve is a 220-acre local authority-owned park that was bought in the 1970s but designed and built by the local community, restoring and transforming the reserve into a diverse area of grasslands, wetlands, wildflower meadows and other habitats, supporting a wide variety of species.

Turvey serves as model of ecological improvement that can be replicated across Ireland at minimal cost, letting nature take over and do most of the work once the habitats are in place. Much of the work involved blocking drains to create new wetland areas, which has allowed the return of breeding swans, ducks, kingfishers, otters and more. This event is free and requires no registration - just rock up and join in.

**22  
SEPT.****WILD TIME - CRAZY PLAY with  
OWLS***1:00pm - 3:00pm at Turvey Nature Reserve, Donabate*

This will be a drop-off event suitable for children aged 7-12 years old. Join us for an event that involves climbing, jumping and wading through water while not touching any of the main paths. There will also be face painting, eating fried insects and making a cool walking staff to take home at the end. An adventure for anyone who enjoys nature and the outdoors.

This event is free but requires registration. Please contact [info@owls.ie](mailto:info@owls.ie) using the headline 'Public Event Booking' with the event(s) you wish to join, your family name and how many people will be attending.





8  
OCT.**COMMUNITY UPDATE** with  
**HOWTH SAAO***7:00pm - 9:00pm at Howth Yacht Club*

A large part of Howth is designated as a Special Amenity Area Order (SAAO) because of its outstanding beauty, special recreational value and nature conservation interests.

Fingal County Council works together with the SAAO committee, (which is made up of local community & interest groups) to protect and enhance the character and special features of Howth.

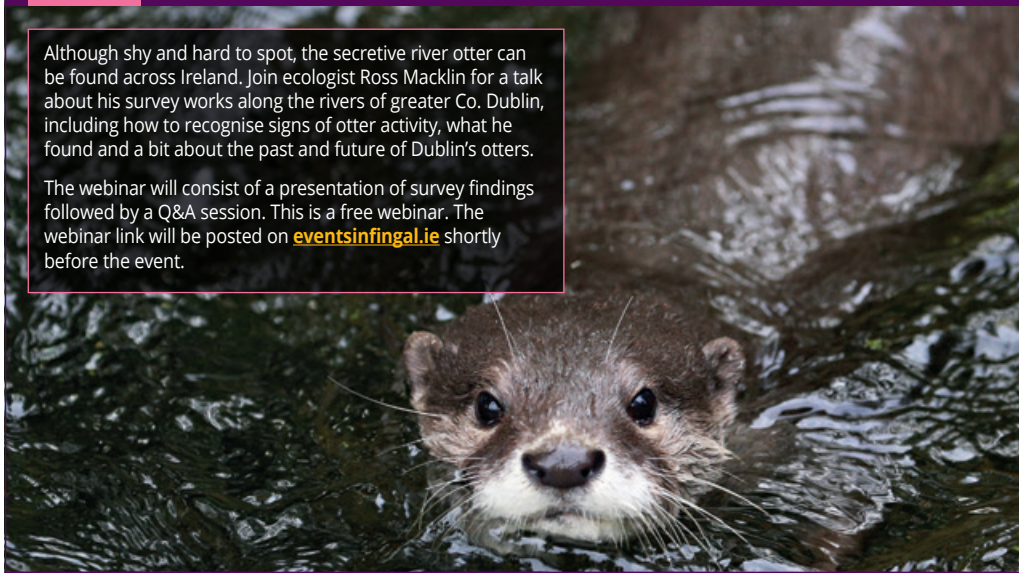
Every year, the SAAO committee organises a public meeting to update local residents and other interested individuals on what has happened in the SAAO. This year the public meeting will include an update on the goat grazing project, the upcoming management plan for the Howth Head Special Area of Conservation and a flora study of Howth.

This is a free event and no booking is required.

**16**  
OCT.**OTTER STUDY: FINGAL RIVERS** with **ROSS MACKLIN**  
(Triturus Environmental Limited)*1:00pm - 2:00pm - Online Webinar*

Although shy and hard to spot, the secretive river otter can be found across Ireland. Join ecologist Ross Macklin for a talk about his survey works along the rivers of greater Co. Dublin, including how to recognise signs of otter activity, what he found and a bit about the past and future of Dublin's otters.

The webinar will consist of a presentation of survey findings followed by a Q&A session. This is a free webinar. The webinar link will be posted on [eventsinfingal.ie](https://eventsinfingal.ie) shortly before the event.

**20**  
OCT.**HOWTH SAFARI** with  
**SHANE'S HOWTH ADVENTURES***11:00am - 3:00pm in Howth*

Take a day trip to Howth and explore the south facing cliffs on a guided hike in spectacular areas of natural beauty. Hike across heathlands and blankets of wildflowers to the cliffs overlooking Dublin Bay, follow quiet coastal trails to secret beaches and hidden coves and discover the famous Martello Towers and Baily Lighthouse. Finally, ascend the cliff path to the Summit with its panoramic views before heading back down to the village.

Be ready for 10 kms to 15 kms (6 to 9 miles) in about 4 hours. We recommend cross trainers, boots or stout shoes and light weight long trousers to avoid nettle stings. Light waterproof, gloves, scarf and hat in a backpack may also be useful, depending on the weather. Bring along water and a snack to enjoy enroute.

Meet outside Bodega Coffee, Howth Market at 11:00am. **BOOKING REQUIRED:** €24.50 per person (50% of normal price). Reserve places online at <https://www.shaneshowthadventures.com>.





**24-25**  
OCT.**FINGAL FUNGUS FESTIVAL with  
HOWARD FOX & MARIA CULLEN***10:00am - 4:00pm, Newbridge House & Farm, Donabate*

Learn about how to collect, cook and enjoy wild, edible, Irish mushrooms in safety. Fungi come in a huge range of colours, shapes and textures: they can be smooth, spiky, knobby, wavy, round, mushroom-shaped, white, brown, red, orange, yellow, colour-changing (yes, really) and many other variations. You may be surprised by what is out there!

Join in on a mushroom hunt across Newbridge Demesne guided by Maria Cullen (mycologist) and Howard Fox (National Botanic Gardens), followed by discussion and display of the fungi and lichens that people found as well as some specimens collected elsewhere in Ireland.

After the mushroom hunt, top chefs Louis Smith (co-author of "Forest Fungi of Ireland") and Patrick McLarnon (Brooks Hotel) will share their love and interest for picking wild mushrooms and their passion for cooking and eating them too! Meet food health advisors from the Food Safety Authority of Ireland and medical staff from the Poisons Information Centre of Ireland, Beaumont Hospital who deal with food safety issues and food poisoning cases.

Check [eventsinfingal.ie](https://www.eventsinfingal.ie) for full details closer to the event.

**27**  
OCT.**WITCHES AND WIZARDS  
with OWLS***1:00pm - 3:00pm at Turvey Nature Reserve, Donabate*

Get ready for Halloween by coming along to this fun event and making your very own witch's or wizard's broom or wand using natural materials found around the park, then finish it off with glitter and spray to give it that final touch of magic. A hands-on creative event for families.

This event is free but requires registration. Please contact [info@owls.ie](mailto:info@owls.ie) using the headline 'Public Event Booking' with the event(s) you wish to join, your family name and how many people will be attending.

**7  
NOV.****OTTER STUDY: FINGAL RIVERS** with **ROSS MACKLIN**  
(Triturus Environmental Limited)**8:00pm - 9:00pm in Skerries or Rush (Venue TBC)**

Although shy and hard to spot, the secretive river otter can be found across Ireland. Join ecologist Ross Macklin for a talk about his survey works along the rivers of greater Co. Dublin, including how to recognise signs of otter activity, what he found and a bit about the past and future of Dublin's otters.

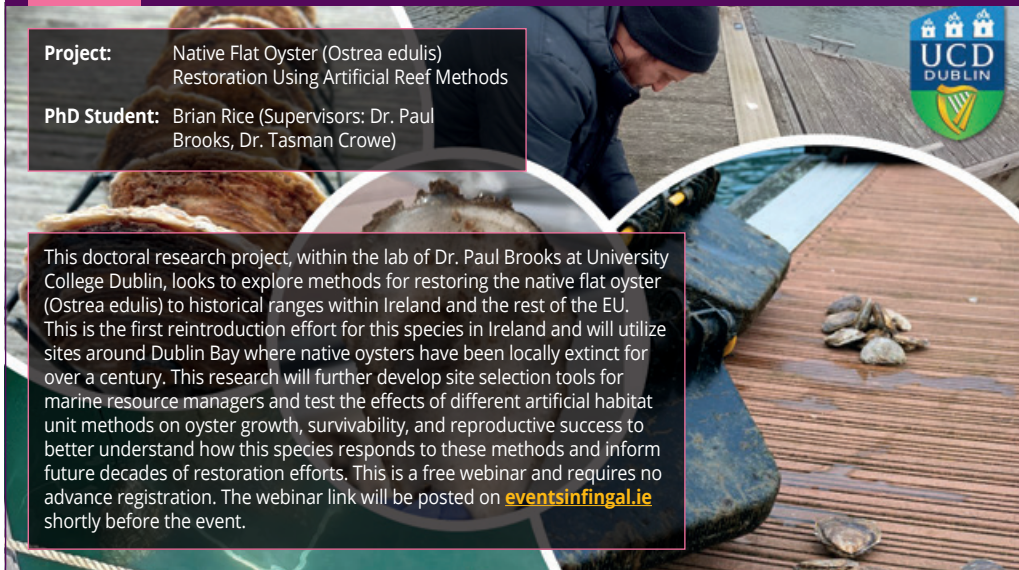
Contact [bwifingal@gmail.com](mailto:bwifingal@gmail.com) for more information on this event.

**15  
NOV.****NATIVE FLAT OYSTER (*OSTREA EDULIS*) RESTORATION**  
with **BRIAN RICE** (Paul Brooks Lab, UCD)**1:00pm - 2:00pm - Online Webinar**

**Project:** Native Flat Oyster (*Ostrea edulis*)  
Restoration Using Artificial Reef Methods

**PhD Student:** Brian Rice (Supervisors: Dr. Paul  
Brooks, Dr. Tasman Crowe)

This doctoral research project, within the lab of Dr. Paul Brooks at University College Dublin, looks to explore methods for restoring the native flat oyster (*Ostrea edulis*) to historical ranges within Ireland and the rest of the EU. This is the first reintroduction effort for this species in Ireland and will utilize sites around Dublin Bay where native oysters have been locally extinct for over a century. This research will further develop site selection tools for marine resource managers and test the effects of different artificial habitat unit methods on oyster growth, survivability, and reproductive success to better understand how this species responds to these methods and inform future decades of restoration efforts. This is a free webinar and requires no advance registration. The webinar link will be posted on [eventsinfingal.ie](https://www.eventsinfingal.ie) shortly before the event.





**23**  
NOV.**STAYING WARM - SURVIVAL EVENT**  
with **OWLS***10:00am - 12:00pm at Turvey Nature Reserve, Donabate*

Learn how primitive man would have stayed warm whilst living in the forest. A survival event where we will be making small fires using natural material and different methods of lighting before finishing with toasted marshmallows and smores. A family fun event.

This event is free but requires registration. Please contact [info@owls.ie](mailto:info@owls.ie) using the headline 'Public Event Booking' with the event(s) you wish to join, your family name and how many people will be attending.



**Comhairle Contae  
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