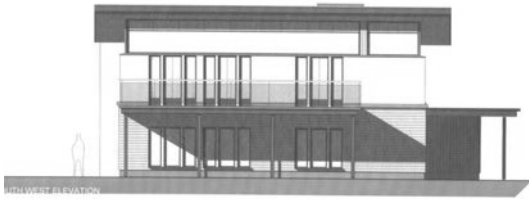


Cabragh Wetlands Trust

Christmas Newsletter 2009

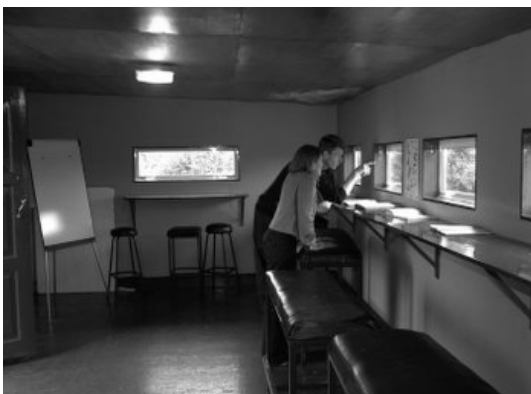


Big plans are afoot for an extension to the centre. After a meeting with Ministers O' Cuiv and Gormley set up by Michael Lowry TD we are continuing to plan for a refurbished education centre. This is an exciting development as we perceive our centre as being a very important and valuable resource in the local and wider community. We hope to expand our role in disseminating information and awareness and to listen to people's insights on vital issues relating to our planet's well-being.

This has been a year full of activity and celebration at Cabragh Wetlands we spent some time during the year evaluating the role of Cabragh Wetlands and charting the course ahead. We see our centre being actively involved in the important work of environmental awareness. As we write this letter people are gathering in Copenhagen for a very important meeting to set new targets for CO2 emissions globally. One hundred and ninety heads of governments have arrived to work out a package which will help to see that our planet continues in good health. We see ourselves as having a part to play in helping to create awareness around this very important work of living in harmony with the earth's systems..

Last year we initiated articles in the Tipperary Star which if the feedback is anything to go by are appreciated by many people. Thanks sincerely to the editor Michael Dundon and his staff for their generous support. Our secretary Adam Tozer is to be commended for his wonderful work in collecting and editing the articles. Thanks to all the writers for challenging and stimulating ideas regarding the environment.

We also have Christmas and greeting cards on sale at the centre with photos of the flora and fauna of the wetlands. Photos on our cards are by our Artist in Residence Eamon Brennan , who is very generous with his time and talents.



Our schools programme continues and we had a big number of Primary Schools visits during the year. We appreciate the grant we receive from the County Council for assistance with school transport and lesson plans. Carmel McLoughlin helped out this year and her assistance is invaluable and much appreciated. We believe that what we have to offer here makes a valuable contribution to environmental education particularly in the field of habitat studies. The summer camp, popular as always, was well attended and feedback from children and parents is very positive. In August we ran a course for teachers 'A Handful of Habitats' Thanks to Jimmy Duggan for organising this.



Our web site is up and running and well worth a regular visit. People visiting the site are from as far a field as China and the USA! Regular news , events and photos can be seen on our blog. 'The Snipe' Our web address is www.cabraghwetlands.ie Our web site allows us to be involved locally while communicating with the wider world.

Together with Comhaltas we hosted regular evenings of Music and Song. We even managed to install a wooden floor for dancing. In November we held a benefit night for Michelle Flanagan who has since departed to work in Calcutta with the Hope Foundation. Word from Michelle is that she is busy and very involved in the lives of street children and making a difference. Our social evenings generally are an opportunity to welcome people from the local community to come and join us .

Our Open day in August was well attended despite another wet day! Again Eanna Ni Lamhna who is always popular and never disappoints, was enjoyable and informative. It concluded with Heritage week which is promoted by an Taisce. Thanks to all our loyal supporters for making this day such a success. It is a valuable source of revenue. This year saw an increased number of stalls promoting renewable energy by local business people. We are happy to work with and promote such initiatives.



Bird Watch continues to use the Wetlands as a bird ring-banding site, and they are putting together valuable information on the population and movement of birds. Rarities like the Skua which Sean Maher found continue to surprise. The preserved Skua is on display at the centre.

Our work at Cabragh Wetlands has received much recognition this year with the Ireland Involved Conservation Award being awarded to Michael Long for his work with Cabragh Wetlands. This prestigious national award was presented by President Mary McAleese in November. Cabragh Wetlands Trust also won the North Tipperary Community and Voluntary Association (CAVA) overall volunteer award.



A recent initiative by CWDT has seen the setting up of an Allotment Group close by. They are working very well and hope to be in a position to plant their plots this spring. The centre here is being offered to them for their meetings.

At this time our series of Winter talks have resumed. We hosted a selection of interesting topics on the environment. Tom Gallagher opened our series of talks with a popular talk on 'Garden Birds and how to attract them'. This was followed by a talk by Dr Kieran Murphy on "Ireland and Climate Change." This is a very relevant and timely topic and this was reflected by the attendance and the level of interest. Please visit our website for information on further talks. We believe that Cabragh Wetlands offers a valuable focus for such environmental issues. Your involvement with us and your support is much appreciated.

On Bird box day Con Kenny (FAS) did great work in preparing the timber for the boxes. On Sat Feb 28th a number of families came to assemble the boxes. As it was a fine day we worked in the sunshine and the children had the joy of seeing their nest boxes being used throughout May and June.

One girl wrote back to say "Thank you for the great day and beautiful birdboxes. Two out of three we made are occupied." A truly exciting experience for a child and older children at heart! We would hope to run such a day again in February



Remember Feb 2nd is World Wetland Day promoted by Ramsar, the World Wetlands Foundation. Visit the website or keep an eye on the Tipperary Star Articles for our celebration of World Wetland Day in early February

We are holding a celebration of the 'Winter Solstice' here at Cabragh Wetlands on Monday December 21st at 8pm and all are welcome.

Many thanks for your support and a very Happy Christmas.

From all at Cabragh Wetlands.

www.cabraghwetlands.ie