

WELCOME

Welcome to the September Edition of the Burrenbeo newsletter, where we're starting to feel the change in the seasons. The sounds of summer are being replaced by the sounds of the school children returning, while the fields and hills are still full of colour, particularly the blues of scabious and harebell. August has been a busy month as always – the inaugural Working for Wellbeing of People and Place celebration of conservation volunteering was a great success as was the annual Walk with a Difference event which was organised in association with the Irish Wheelchair Association. September in the Trust office will be spent busily preparing for the Burren Winterage Weekend in late October.....

BURREN NEWS

Fantastic Celebration of Active Conservation Volunteering

The inaugural Celebration of Active Conservation Volunteering, Working for Wellbeing of People and Place which was held in Corofin on the 12th - 13th August was a resounding success. Burrenbeo Trust and the Burrenbeo Conservation Volunteers hosted an enthusiastic and vibrant group of volunteers and organisations for a two day event featuring talks, workshops, fieldtrips and a community feast. There was a great sharing of information, experience and networking and hopefully all who attended will have left energised and even more committed to their conservation projects. A huge thank you to all the speakers, workshop leaders and participants who contributed to the event, the local landowners, the NPWS, the BCV committee and the Corofin Community Hall group. There are so many people that contributed their time to this event and we are hugely grateful. [Here](#) is the full report online. Here some of our favourite photos from the event.



SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST THIS MONTH

Culture Night – on the 16th of September the country will be awash with free cultural events. Be sure to check out and support the local events [here](#).

Autumn Equinox – On or around September 21st, the equinox is the moment when the plane of Earth's equator passes the centre of the Sun and day and night time are roughly equal. Some megalithic monuments were built to align with the sun on the equinox.

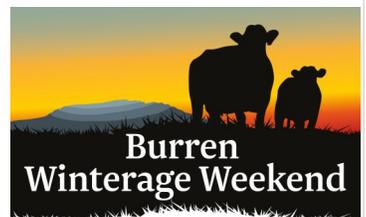


Culture night in the Burren— Twilight over Blackhead

Burrenbeo Trust are organising a one off night time walk on Blackhead on the 16th September to coincide with National Culture Night called *Twilight over Blackhead*. The walk will be meeting at 7.30pm at Murogthoohy layby, Fanore and will include songs, stories, music and star gazing! Led by Shane Casey with some special guests the event will give a different perspective on the Burren and its cultural heritage. Bring a torch!

Plans afoot for the 2016 Burren Winterage Weekend

Now in its fifth year, the Burren Winterage Weekend (27th-30th October) encompasses demonstrations, cultural events, informative talks, guided walks and much more across the Burren. The weekend will start with the Burren Winterage School based in Kilfenora, this will be a wide range of talks, farm demonstrations and stories from the ground on high nature value farming, the conservation outputs and what is involved. Anyone is welcome to attend but it will be booking in advance. The other main



Celebrating our Farming Heritage



gatherings will include three herdsman's walks across the Burren with those that know it best, a food fayre in Lisdoonvarna of local produce and the annual Burren Winterage Cattle Drive whereby the community get together and drive a herd of cattle up a hill and celebrating this as a group. The full programme will be available on www.burrenwinterage.com at the end of September 2016 with the what, where, how and who. So keep your eyes peeled so you don't miss out. To demonstrate that the Burren Winterage Weekend is a good platform to showcase how high nature value farming works, Burrenbeo Trust got the opportunity to meet EU Commissioner Phil Hogan and other local TDs to express the need for farming programmes across Europe be supported by place-based learning programmes like those that Burrenbeo Trust carry out. Photos from the day can be seen [here](#).

A Walk with a Difference

As part of Heritage Week, Burrenbeo Trust carried out the annual Walk with a Difference in association with the Irish Wheelchair Association from the Clare and Limerick branches, and the Brothers of Charity Ennis branch. The event was aimed at introducing the Burren to wheelchair users and people with reduced mobility. Along with Burrenbeo volunteers and a group of heritage experts the participants enjoyed a walk along the Carron high commons. Over 30 people in total enjoyed learning about different aspects of natural and built heritage along this area with the stunning Burren hills looming in the background. The event opened up the landscape and heritage of the Burren to a group that may at times have difficulty with access. Burrenbeo Trust are hugely grateful to Drs Brendan Dunford and Sharon Parr for sharing their knowledge with a big thanks to Richard Morrison for organising the event, the Dalys for their fantastic spread of teas afterwards and Linda for the photos.



Register for the Big Beach Clean!

It's that time of the year again, the Big Beach Clean weekend is just around the corner! This year the Big Beach Clean takes place 16th to 18th September. To organise a beach clean in your area, just fill out the form on the Clean Coasts website (www.cleancoasts.org) and you're ready to go! Make sure you register soon though as the free clean-up packs are available only while stocks last so time is running out. More information from Sinead McCoy, 01 4002210, smccoy@eeu.antaisce.org.

Caherconnell excavation featured in Popular Archaeology

Ongoing work which is being carried out at Caherconnell ringfort was featured in an article which was recently published by Popular Archaeology and can be viewed [here](#).



Burren among shortlisted regions for 'Foodie Destination'

Ten locations have been shortlisted for the best "foodie destination" in Ireland. Boyne Valley, Cong in Co Mayo, Derry, the Dublin coastal villages of Howth, Malahide and Skerries, Kilkenny, Leitrim, Monaghan, Sligo, The Burren and The Loop Head Peninsula in Co Clare have all been selected by the Restaurants Association of Ireland. The Burren won it last year and is going for the two in a row. The winning town/destination will be crowned Foodie Destination of Ireland 2016 on September 29th.

Love in the Burren

The Lisdoonvarna matchmaking festival returns this year from the 2nd September to the 9th of October. There are different themes on each weekend, more information on www.matchmakerireland.com.

English as we speak it

The North Clare Historical Society new lectures series begins on Monday 26th September. The first talk will be 'English as we speak it in North Clare' by John Egan. The talk starts at 8.30pm in the The Courthouse, Ennistymon and admission is €5.

Burren Peaks Walking Festival

The Ballyvaughan Fanore walking club Burren Peaks Walking Festival is taking place on the 23rd – 25th September. There are a series of walks over the weekend and more information is available here www.burrenpeakswalkingfestival.com/FestivalWalks.html

Funded PhD Scholarship.

The ecology and conservation of plant-pollinator interactions in species rich grasslands with the Botany and Plant Science, School of Natural Sciences, at the National University of Ireland, Galway. Pollinators play a critical role in ecosystems, with over 80% of flowering plants requiring some form of biotic pollination to reproduce. In NW Europe, pollinator diversity is largely associated with species rich grasslands. The rural parts of the west of Ireland (including the world famous Burren region) represent a stronghold for both species rich grasslands and a number of rare bee species. This PhD has the scope to investigate the ecology of some of these rare bee species, their role as pollinators in species rich grasslands, and what farmland management options are beneficial for both plant and pollinator diversity. It is hoped that outputs from this research will be able to feed into land management policy (e.g. agri-environment schemes) and support the All Ireland Pollinator Plan. This project will be based in NUI Galway, which is ideally placed for easy access to the Burren and surrounding areas where fieldwork will be carried out. The successful candidate will register for a Structured PhD Programme with a stipend. More info to Dr Stanley via email (dara.stanley@nuigalway.ie) Review of applicants will begin on 10th September 2016.

Burrenbeo Tea Talks will be back in October

Put the 2nd Wednesday of each month between Oct-Mar in the diary for the Winter Tea talks at the earlier time of 8pm in Tubber Village Hall. Speakers to be confirmed.

News from further afield....Féile na gCloch on Inis Oírr, Aran Islands from Thursday 15th to Sunday 18th September 2016.

Talks and workshops on stone wall building. More info [here](#)

Iveragh Learning Landscapes from the 14th to the 16th of

October, a two day symposium on cultural awareness, outdoor learning and nature connection. Examples of workshop leaders

include Anders Szcsepanski from Linköping University, in Sweden, Lucy Hunt - local marine expert, Brigid Barry – Burrenbeo Trust, Gordan D'arcy- environmental educator & artist, Niall Hogan - Herbal Medicine and lots more. More information and bookings [here](#).



BURRENBEO TRUST EVENTS CALENDER Sept 2016 (Print & Post)

Sun 4th 2pm Gortlecka

Burrenbeo Trust September walk is 'Changing Seasons at Lough Avalla' with Harry Jeuken and Family on the 4th September 2016 at 2pm, meeting at Gortlecka Crossroads (51R 304 945). More info aine@burrenbeo.com or 091 638096.

Sun 4th 8am Oughtmama

The Ballyvaughan Fanore walking group are walking 'Corker Hill to Slieve Carran'. Meeting at the Green Road at the Top of The Corker Hill on the Bellharbour-Kinvara Rd @ 10.30am for walk @ 11am. Contact Helen Sheridan 086 4089979

Fri 16th 7.30pm Blackhead

Twilight over Blackhead is a nighttime walk led by Dublin Biodiversity Officer and local Shane Casey and will include music, song and an exploratory walk on heritage of the headland. **NIGHT TIME WALK**

Other points of interest

April—Oct Burren Every Monday the Burren Food Trail will carry out a themed food event will take place in locations around the Burren. www.burren.ie

May—Oct Kinvara Kinvara Farmers Market every Friday from 10am-2pm.

May—Oct Ballvaughan Ballyvaughan Farmers Market every Saturday in the village hall from 10am-2pm.

May—Oct Ballyvaughan Burren Arts and Crafts Market starts every Sunday in the village hall from 10am-6pm.



PLACE-BASED LEARNERS

Learning about place, through place, in place.

Burrenbeo Trust aims to help connect people to the Burren landscape and their role in safeguarding it—this is place-based learning and community stewardship. The following sections give an insight into some of our programmes and how you can get involved.

Ecobeo and Áitbheo

With students back in schools are thoughts turn once again to Ecobeo. We're taking a few months to work on updating the programme and will be in touch with schools to get scholarship applications later in the year. We'll be starting Áitbheo in Seamount in October and look forward to working with another group of Transition Year students.

Young Burren Ambassadors Bursary deadline extended

We've received a number of very interesting proposals submitted as applications for the Ann O'Connor Dunford Burren Young Ambassador Bursary. However, we received feedback from teachers, parents and students that the deadline timing at the start of the summer made application difficult. We have decided to relaunch the application and hope to visit local schools to get students thinking about the process. Applicants are asked to propose a project based around their own experience and interest in the Burren. If you'd like us to visit your school get in touch with Elaine on elaine@burrenbeo.com.

Monthly Walks & Talks

The Burrenbeo Trust September walk is 'Changing Seasons at Lough Avalla' with Harry Jeuken and Family on the 4th September 2016 at 2pm, meeting at Gortlecka Crossroads (51R 304 945).

Join us on one of the Burren's most stunning walks around the Lough Avalla loop walk and catch the last of the summer blossoms. Harry Jeuken is the landowner at Lough Avalla and has a wealth of knowledge of the holy wells, the winterage, and the story of the local land. Harry and his family are certified organic farmers and also farm biodynamically. Amongst other things Harry's family make cheese from their own goat herd. The walk will take us on a tour of the land farmed by Harry and his family taking a look at the archaeology, geology, botany, history and agriculture of the area. The meeting point will be Gortlecka cross at 1.45pm for 2.00pm start. The start point is marked on this map. As parking is limited we suggest people car share or arrive early and please be mindful of landowners and road users when parking. Suitable shoes and clothing for walking required, as well as waterproofs, sunblock or warm cloths etc as necessary. This is a strenuous walk some of which is on broken pavement with a couple of climbs and descents and will be slightly longer than our usual walks – lasting for 2.5 – 3 hours. There will be tea and cake at the farmhouse afterwards for an extra donation – €5 suggested. **Due to presence of livestock on the land no dogs are allowed on the walk.** For more information see www.burrenbeo.com, email aine@burrenbeo.com or call 091 638096. Thanks to Dr David Drew and Dr Micheline Sheehy Skeffington for leading the August walk and to NPWS for letting us walk at Garryland.



CONSERVATION NOTES

We have developed this section to fill you in on what is special about the Burren, what are some of the conservation challenges, and how you can get more actively involved.

Conservation Volunteering – working together for the greater good of our environment and our communities

Last month we celebrated our first ever conservation volunteering gathering – which saw 86 delegates attend, 30 organisations represented and a host of enthusiastic, energetic and passionate people come together and share ideas and experiences during 'Working for Wellbeing of People and Place'. This event aimed to showcase the impact volunteering can have both on the ground and on a personal level – while also provide invaluable discussions on how we can mobilise these community initiatives further, through learning from experts in the field. It was launched by keynote addresses from Duncan Stewart (Eco Eye & Chairman of Green Foundation Ireland) and Stuart Brooks (CEO of John Muir Trust & chairman of the IUCN) and endeavoured to encapsulate everything that's exciting about conservation volunteering! It gave people the chance to learn about various conservation groups, hear from experts in health and wellbeing, food sovereignty campaigning, conservation practices, while also experience active conservation fieldtrips out in the beautiful Burren and much, much more. Speakers and facilitators straddled the food, environment, nature, health, wellbeing, conservation and community arena, demonstrating how these concepts all are so deeply interlinked.

This exciting event, which was the first of its kind provided a magnificent platform for volunteers and organisations to share 'challenges' they faced within conservation volunteering – but most importantly, work towards potential 'solutions' as a united team. It also emphasised the importance and value that needs to be placed on volunteers – without individuals actively engaging in conservation practices within their surroundings, the future of these areas are being jeopardised. We as a nation are looking further afield for the answers when it comes to conservation - when in actual fact, we can have a great impact if we think globally, act locally, change individually and work collectively. In order to achieve this, we need to focus on educating people about their place and the importance of the 'local', whether it be about conserving the natural and build landscape or sourcing food produce. However, education alone is not enough – we then need to engage these people and once they are part of the wider volunteering community – there needs to be appreciation shown for their efforts and time. All of these are key when it comes to thinking about how we as a small community can have a large impact on the ground. Discussions like this, provoked truly enlightening conversations at this event and got us really excited about getting back outdoors!

Throughout the event, we were really thrilled to bring together key and contemporary discussions from inspiring speakers and delegates on conservation volunteering. Discussions acknowledged the importance of looking at the physical, cultural and historical landscape and also conservation of species and habitats, however – there was also a great emphasis placed on the wellbeing benefits for the volunteer as well. Community engagement and a move away from sedentary lifestyles can have a positive physical and mental health impact on our personal wellbeing – thus, green exercise is gaining traction within the medical world, despite the lack of long-term studies. Volunteer groups within the UK are advocating for more 'Green Gyms' – getting people outdoors and exercising in a more fun and social manner. We're definitely on for this in the Burren – but there has got to be an obligatory tea break in between. Our volunteers are not giving that up!

This event was quite distinctive for many reasons, not only because it connected us with likeminded volunteers, but it afforded us all the opportunity to solidify these newfound friendships by sharing food together. A magnificent community feast was prepared beautifully using home grown, local produce which was all donated by the generous delegates and shared with 67 people. This really was a spectacular way to finish the event – using food as a metaphor for building a strong community culture, which relies heavily on hard work but with huge rewards, much like conservation volunteering. *(compiled by Elaine Williams)*



Join the Burrenbeo Conservation Volunteers



Becoming a volunteer offers you an opportunity to build skills, knowledge about place and indeed, lasting friendships whilst also making a difference to the conservation of this unique landscape. This is an active group of conservation volunteers that have been working in areas of archaeology conservation, rare species monitoring, managing scrub encroachment and much more since 2010. We have 1-2 events a month. Why should you get involved?

- **Get outdoors, enjoy some healthy exercise and give something back in the region**
- **Learn new skills in conservation and heritage management**
- **Be part of a friendly, inclusive and active conservation community**

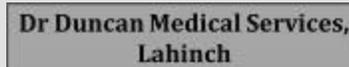
The Burrenbeo Conservation Volunteers are continuing to work on a range of projects including stone wall building and scrub clearing. Volunteer events are interesting, sociable and educational – why not get out and join the volunteers this month! This month's upcoming events are an archaeology event and a bat workshop. See below. **More information contact volunteer@burrenbeo.com**

BURRENBEO TRUST BUSINESS MEMBERSHIP

BURRENBEO BUSINESS MEMBERS 2016

Please support these businesses that support the work of the Burrenbeo Trust working towards the future sustainability of the region together.

More details on our business members [here](#)



Why not become a Burrenbeo Business Friend this year?

Not only are you supporting the education and conservation of the Burren region but you are giving your business an advantage—it is advertised here on our newsletter and on our website with an accumulative audience of 80,000 people. It is €180/€360/€600 for the year. Our business friends so far this year are listed above. More information go [here](#).

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