



REPORT

**Delgany Tidy Towns, with the support of
Green Foundation Ireland, Delgany Golf Club
and the Local Authority Waters and
Community Office, presents**

Biodiversity Bites Delgany



Venue: Delgany Golf Club, Delgany, County Wicklow

Sunday 19 May 2019 – 4:00pm

*This event is part of the National Biodiversity Week 2019
organised by Irish Environmental Network*

Approximately 90 people, including *Irish Times* reporter Sylvia Thompson, attended the interesting and engaging *Biodiversity Bites Delgany* held in Delgany Golf Club, and the following article by her appeared in *The Irish Times* the next day.

In addition to this, **Donna Mullen** (Chair of Green Foundation Ireland) made a presentation about how to encourage biodiversity in your own garden in a practical manner, of the importance all kinds of insects and birdlife, and how we can help them live with us. Donna ended the afternoon with a workshop especially for the younger ones in the audience during which she showed children and adults how to make a bat box from the kits provided. A bat box was available to everyone in the audience who wanted one, courtesy of Green Foundation Ireland.

As well as this, there was a presentation by **Keith Scanlan** of the results of the Preliminary Biodiversity Survey of Delgany's Three Trouts Stream and area.

Zoe Woodward of Delgany Tidy Towns, also noted that there was also a memorial presentation to the late Éamon de Buitléar's widow Lailli in recognition of his work to wildlife and the local community.

Zoe extended a massive thank you to everyone who was involved, including the speakers, the organisers, the supporters, the attendees, those who participated from the floor, and especially to Joan Campbell for chairing the event.

The Irish Times – Monday 20 May 2019

Irish farmers will adapt to climate change 'with the right advice'

*Gathering in Co Wicklow discusses challenges
of reducing greenhouse gas emissions*



Sylvia Thompson

Irish farmers feel like they are being blamed for climate change but they will rise to the challenges of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, a researcher in agricultural biodiversity told a gathering to celebrate National Biodiversity Week in Co Wicklow on Sunday.

"Farmers are the owners and managers of the land and they did all the things we asked them to do to become successful farmers – so with the right advice and support, they will change. We can address biodiversity, ecosystems services [provision of clean water, food and a stable environment], climate change mitigation and adaptation together," said **Jeremy Emmet-Booth**, a postdoctoral researcher with the Climate Change Advisory Council.

Moving away from monoculture rye grassland to multispecies grassland which includes clover, plantain and chicory would, according to Mr Emmet-Booth, bring multiple benefits for livestock and nature.

"Clover reduces the need to spread nitrogen which benefits the climate and multispecies grassland improves the health and fertility of livestock and reduces parasites," he said.

Ninety per cent of agriculture in Ireland is grassland based and 32 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions in Ireland come from agriculture.

Speaking at the Biodiversity Bites Delgany event, **Matthew Jebb**, botanist and director of the National Botanic Gardens said that we need to move away from the dramatic biodiversity story that "all is lost" to finding solutions.

"A robust ecosystem is our best hope and our biggest safety net to provide clean water and food," he said.

Citing Scotland as an example of a country that funded ecosystem services, Mr Jebb said the Scottish government realised that looking after the ecosystem saved money in the long run. "In Scotland they realised that clean mountains produce clean water which costs less to purify but, in Ireland, we spend about four times more on rubbish removal than we do on ensuring our biodiversity is robust."

Taking the Glen of the Downs special area of conservation in Co Wicklow as a local example, Mr Jebb said a community response to the removal of invasive species such as laurels would be helpful. Creating wildflower areas in gardens and golf courses were other beneficial things to do for biodiversity, he added.

Environmentalist **Duncan Stewart** said the most important thing communities could do was to educate themselves about biodiversity loss and climate change and inform those around them.

"I'm hearing that climate change and biodiversity loss are still not topics on the doorsteps for our local and European elections this week. We have to make the links between our use of fossil fuels in our homes, transport and agriculture with climate change and act quickly.

"The biggest issue still is that society is not impressing on our politicians that action is needed now because our children's future is at risk."

Delgany Tidy Towns, which organised the event, launched the Delgany Tree for a Child programme under which a tree will be planted for each child in the village over the next five years.