



REPORT

Green Foundation Ireland

invites you to an evening online TALK
with **Féidhlim Harty**,
Environmental Consultant, Educator and Writer

Ponds for Farms and Communities, Step by Step



Photo by: FÉIDHLIM HARTY of FH Wetland Systems

Venue: by Zoom *(details given after registration)*
Monday 23 January 2023 – 19:00 to 20:00

Admission to this event is **FREE** but you **MUST** register beforehand.
You can do so through **our Eventbrite page**.

Ponds for Farms and Communities, Step by Step

THEME

This talk gives an overview of pond design and construction to help landowners and local communities create new ponds. Ponds provide valuable habitat for wildlife as well as beautiful areas to walk near and watch nature.

We explore siting, sizing, shape, edge slope, depth and aftercare; looking at the steps needed to get from discussing the initial idea through to design, construction and finish.

ABOUT OUR SPEAKER

Féidhlim Harty



Féidhlim is an environmental consultant, educator and writer.

He established [FH Wetland Systems](#) in 1996 to offer constructed wetland and reed bed design to address water pollution in our rivers, streams and seas.

Now, with the growing awareness of the impacts of urban stormwater runoff and farm-scale water flows and dynamics, FHWS offers designs and guidance on waterway repair and rewilding, eco-friendly wastewater treatment, and holistic land use management for catchment protection and regeneration.

Féidhlim and his family live in Lahinch in County Clare, where they are renovating an old cottage and using innovative stormwater and wastewater treatment systems and developing ponds, leaky dams, filter drains and other low-tech on-farm water management features to keep the water cleaner and as a teaching tool.

ABOUT OUR FACILITATOR

Donna Mullen

Chair of Green Foundation Ireland, **Donna** is an environmentalist and works as an ecologist, drawing up nature trails and sustainability plans. Her work involves spending many happy hours surveying buildings for bats.

ABOUT OUR TALK

Donna Mullen welcomed everyone to our event and introduced **Féidhlim Harty**, who began his talk by showing us the benefits of ponds, for conservation and alleviation of flooding. Drainage and the loss of boggy corners in fields leads to flooding, and environmental problems are compounded by the runoff of nitrates and phosphates from septic tanks. Less than 1% of Irish waters are in pristine condition. If we look at www.catchments.ie, we can see the water quality of our local rivers and streams. Studies in the [Orbroicher Bruch Nature Reserve](#) in North-West Germany have found a decline in insects of 78% in 24 years, and providing ponds can really improve insect diversity. Ponds can be used for recreation, such as the Community Pond in North Cork, or can be used for growing crops, such as watercress. They can also be used for aquaculture, for irrigation, or even to provide water for firefighting.



Féidhlim then spoke about the techniques for pond installation. Planning permission is required if the pond is deeper than 1 metre. It is important when designing the pond for wildlife to undulate the edge and vary the depth. The bank slopes should be shallow, with a shallow gradient, and there can be islands or parts which flood seasonally. He then explained the usage of soil bunds, plugs, dams and drains, and the safety considerations of creating ponds.

Féidhlim told us about the resources available from the Irish [Local Authorities Waters Programme](#) (LAWPRO) and the [One Million Ponds Project](#) which is based in the UK.

Then we learnt about pond management and pond plants including bulrushes, water mint, common reed, and yellow flag iris.

With almost 70 participants on the evening, a lively question and answer session followed, and included questions being asked about pond placement, liners, swimming ponds, and drainage. Many of those attending were in the throes of pond creation, and it was wonderful to see the enthusiasm for all watery things !

This was an amazing talk which will have us all creating wetlands !

You can [access our video of the talk here](#)

Green Foundation Ireland

30 January 2023