



REPORT

Green Foundation Ireland

invites you to an evening online TALK

with **Rossa Cassidy** of the

Rediscovery Centre, Ballymun, Dublin

Biodiversity Actions Everyone Can Take

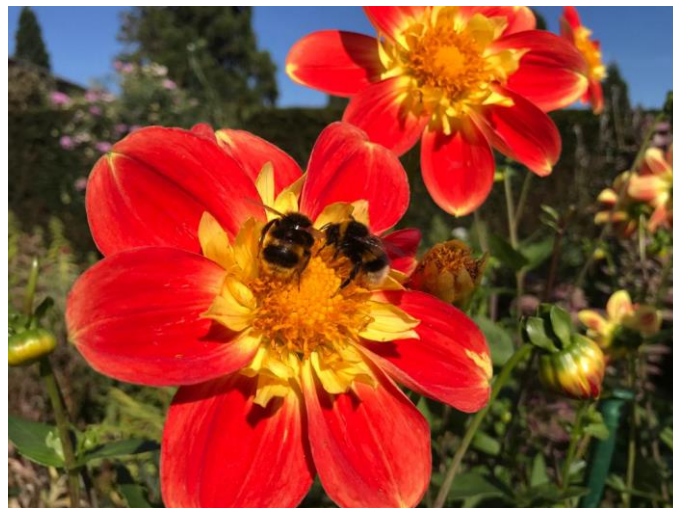


Photo by: MARTIN NOLAN, Director of Green Foundation Ireland

Venue: by Zoom (details given after registration)

Thursday 25 May 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 here](#).

Biodiversity Actions Everyone Can Take

THEME

Our talk looked at the importance of supporting biodiversity and issues we are facing. We focused on solutions and actions everyone can take to support biodiversity, with practical tips and links for further information.

This event was part of the [National Biodiversity Week 2023](#) organised by [Irish Environmental Network](#).

ABOUT OUR SPEAKER

Rossa Cassidy



A combination of having a background in Outdoor Education and working in the food industry is where Rossa's love for food and the outdoors met. This led him to set up a farm in Glasnevin, Dublin.

He joined the Education Department at the [Rediscovery Centre](#) in Ballymun, Dublin and took on the role as Biodiversity Officer.

Rossa also became a member of the Ballymun Biodiversity Action Group (BBAG), a committee set up to implement the Ballymun Biodiversity Action Plan, the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan and advising Dublin City Council and other groups on biodiversity responsibility on planning projects in the area, as well as helping to set up a network of biodiversity groups in Dublin.

ABOUT OUR FACILITATOR

Claire Downey

Claire, who is a Director of Green Foundation Ireland, is Policy and Research Director at the [Rediscovery Centre](#).

Prior to this, she was the National Network Co-Ordinator with Community Reuse Network Ireland (CRNI), an all-Ireland umbrella body funded by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that represents community based organisations involved in reuse and recycling.



ABOUT OUR TALK

Claire Downey welcomed everyone to the event and introduced Rossa Cassidy, who began his talk by sharing a bit about his background and the city farm he runs in Glasnevin. He also introduced the [Rediscovery Centre](#), where he currently works, describing the approaches to supporting biodiversity including providing green spaces (roof garden, external green wall), providing habitats in the form of boxes for birds, bug "hotels" for insects and the pond for aquatic insects, plants and animals, as well as pollinator planting to support insect life in the garden.

Rossa then explored in a clear and simple way eight types of biodiversity actions that everyone can take. These include:

- 1. Protecting and supporting the biodiversity we already have** by respecting natural spaces, and knowing and understanding the issues.
- 2. Leaving areas to rewild** through natural regrowth.
- 3. Composting** using natural rather than manufactured or imported fertiliser for plant growth, **and the planting** of pollinator friendly plants. The [All-Ireland Pollinator Plan](#) is a useful resource for this.
- 4. Providing food, water and shelter** for insects, birds and others. There are a wide variety of bird nest boxes, feeders, bird baths, insect homes, but it is important to consider the types of birds or insects you want to encourage as the design may differ. Rossa encouraged everyone to make simple bird feeders from reused materials. It is also important to remember that, once you start feeding birds, you continue to put out food for them. Rossa also recommended collecting rainwater and providing water for birds, bees and butterflies. He noted that older houses typically had many gaps and holes for insects and birds to shelter in, but new homes do not and therefore there are fewer shelters for them.
- 5. Organic and chemical free gardening.** This ensures plants are more resilient. Homemade compost can be very valuable for organic and chemical free gardening. There are many approaches to chemical free gardening and it is worth trying out different ideas like using garlic sprays, or companion planting where, for example, garlic or chives can deter slugs from attacking other plants.
- 6. Create wildlife corridors.** Many smaller animals require room to roam. As spaces become increasingly built up and disconnected (due to fencing off), animals like hedgehogs no longer have the ability to roam freely. Ensuring your garden or spaces are connected, by creating holes or spaces through hedges or fences for them to pass into other green spaces, helps to generate wildlife corridors.

7. **Citizen Science and Reporting.** Many organisations, including Birdwatch Ireland's [Garden Bird Survey](#), Bat Conservation Ireland's [Summer Bat Count](#), and the National Biodiversity Data Centre's [Citizen's Science webpage](#), welcome citizens submitting data on biodiversity.
8. **Community Action.** Finally, communities coming together to support clean-ups, planting, biodiversity mapping, generating wildlife corridors and seed swaps all drive the conversation and engagement in biodiversity action.

This concluded the talk, but there was a very active questions and answers session covering:

- How does a community go about developing a Biodiversity Action Plan? [Community Foundation Ireland](#) has supported community groups to develop these plans and may open another funding round in the future. This funding supported Ballymun Tidy Towns to access an ecologist who developed the plan on their behalf.

The talk was very well received by all of those present and Rossa was thanked for his contribution.

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

Green Foundation Ireland

22 June 2023