

WILDLIFE RECORDING, COMMUNICATING, MANAGING AND ENHANCING PROJECT

Introduction

Tullamore Tidy Towns is taking part in a project to record, communicate, manage and enhance wildlife in the town. The project commenced in January 2013 and will run through September 2013. The project is being managed by the Offaly Community Forum with funding from the Offaly Local Development Company. The project is being carried out by Tullamore Tidy Towns with specialist help from Blackthorn Ecology, a group of consultant ecologists.



Young woodland in Tullamore Town Park

Objectives

The project has three main objectives:

- Recording – finding out what plants and animals live in Tullamore
- Communicating – sharing this knowledge with the community
- Managing & Enhancing – developing practical measures to conserve biodiversity and make it better for future generations

At the end of the project, we will have compiled a biodiversity management plan detailing actions we will be carrying out over the next five years and outlining objectives for the following ten years. We will have a much better understanding of the biodiversity resources of the town and we will be better placed to add to this knowledge in the future.

Recording

Blackthorn Ecology has carried out a review of existing wildlife records in Tullamore and has talked with local biologists and organisations to find out what plants and animals are known or are likely to be found in the town. Field surveys are being carried out by Blackthorn Ecology to record a wide range of species groups. The field surveys completed or planned include:

- Wintering bird survey – completed in January



- Preliminary habitat survey – completed in March
- 1st breeding bird survey – completed in April
- Freshwater survey (focusing on aquatic invertebrates, plants and fish) – completed in May
- 1st botanical survey (focusing on spring flowering plants, mosses and lichens) – completed in May
- 2nd breeding bird survey – to be carried out in June
- 1st invertebrate survey (focusing on grasshoppers, bumblebees, butterflies and dragonflies) – to be carried out in June
- 2nd botanical survey (focusing on summer flowering plants) – to be carried out in July
- 2nd invertebrate survey (focusing on late-emerging insects) – to be carried out in July

A professional ecologist specialising in the species group will carry out each of the surveys.

Some of the results of the surveys to date are appended at the back.

All of the records collected will be assembled into a Tullamore Biodiversity Inventory that will be maintained and added to through the future.



Tullamore River

Communicating

Once we have a good understanding of what plants and animals live in our town and where the biodiversity hotspots are, we will spread this knowledge through the local community. Some of the ways we will increase awareness and interest in our local biodiversity will include:

- The Tullamore Biodiversity Inventory will be made available to schools, youth groups and any other interested parties.
- The results of the recording surveys will be used to design interpretive signs and develop local nature walks.
- An ecologist will lead a guided walk in the town during Heritage Week 2013 (17-25 August).



Managing and Enhancing

Tullamore Tidy Towns will prepare a Biodiversity Management Plan with specialist help from Blackthorn Ecology based on the results of the field surveys and review of existing records. The plan will contain clear proposals for managing and enhancing biodiversity in Tullamore. Short-term proposals will include detailed prescriptions of work to be undertaken at particular points during the first five years (2013-2017). Medium term (2018-2027) measures for ongoing management, monitoring and corrective works will be specified. Where possible, contingency measures will be detailed to tackle foreseeable threats to biodiversity or to adapt to new developments, such as colonisation by new species of high conservation interest.

The specific biodiversity management and enhancement measures in the plan will depend on what habitats, plants and animals are already present and what is the potential for enhancement in specific areas. They will also depend on what work has already been done. Management measures could include, for example:

- Creating a wildlife pond or wetland
- Watercourse bank enhancement / protection
- Creating species-rich meadows
- Eradicating invasive species
- Installing interpretive signboards
- Planting new hedgerows or bringing neglected hedgerows into management
- Restoring wetlands
- Establishing new native woodland
- Developing nature trails
- Putting up bird or bat boxes
- Constructing insect hotels and log piles
- Changing mowing regimes
- Changing biodiversity-unfriendly management, e.g. cleaning moss from stone walls or headstones or unnecessary herbicide use
- Installing bat-friendly full cut-off lighting
- Creating areas of bare ground for warmth-loving insects (e.g. solitary bees and wasps)
- Planting shrubs (willows, hawthorn, rowan, etc.) as nectar and pollen sources for spring-flying bees and hoverflies.

All the management measures will be linked to maps showing biodiversity hotspots, ecological corridors between hotspots and areas for enhancement.



Appendix – Tullamore Biodiversity Inventory

Below is a provisional inventory of biodiversity for the town of Tullamore. Species will be added to the list by Blackthorn Ecology throughout 2013, and beyond 2013 by Tullamore Tidy Towns.

Species Group	Common Name	Species	Conservation Status
bird	Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	
bird	Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	
bird	Black-headed Gull	<i>Larus ridibundus</i>	
bird	Blue Tit	<i>Parus caeruleus</i>	
bird	Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	
bird	Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	
bird	Coal Tit	<i>Parus ater</i>	
bird	Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	
bird	Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	
bird	Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>	
bird	Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	
bird	Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	
bird	Greenfinch	<i>Carduelis chloris</i>	
bird	Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	
bird	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	Amber List
bird	Jackdaw	<i>Corvus monedula</i>	
bird	Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	Amber List
bird	Linnet	<i>Carduelis cannabina</i>	Amber List
bird	Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>	
bird	Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	
bird	Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	
bird	Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	
bird	Pied Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	
bird	Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	
bird	Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	
bird	Sedge Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>	
bird	Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	
bird	Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	Amber List



Species Group	Common Name	Species	Conservation Status
bird	Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	Amber List
bird	Treecreeper	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>	
bird	Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i>	
bird	Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	
bird	Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	
higher plant	opposite-leaved pondweed	<i>Groenlandia densa</i>	Flora Protection Order
liverwort	Dilated Scalewort	<i>Frullania dilatata</i>	
liverwort	Forked Veilwort	<i>Metzgeria furcata</i>	
mollusc	zebra mussel	<i>Dreissena polymorpha</i>	invasive exotic
moss	Anomalous Bristle-moss	<i>Orthotrichum anomalum</i>	
moss	Bicoloured Bryum	<i>Bryum dichotomum</i>	
moss	Bird's-claw Beard-moss	<i>Barbula unguiculata</i>	
moss	Capillary Thread-moss	<i>Bryum capillare</i>	
moss	Common Feather-moss	<i>Kindbergia praelonga</i>	
moss	Creeping Feather-moss	<i>Amblystegium serpens</i>	
moss	Cylindric Beard-moss	<i>Didymodon insulanus</i>	
moss	Cypress-leaved Plait-moss	<i>Hypnum cupressiforme</i> var. <i>cupressiforme</i>	
moss	Dusky Beard-moss	<i>Didymodon luridus</i>	
moss	Great Hairy Screw-moss	<i>Syntrichia ruralis</i> var. <i>ruralis</i>	
moss	Greater Water-moss	<i>Fontinalis antipyretica</i>	
moss	Grey-cushioned Grimmia	<i>Grimmia pulvinata</i>	
moss	Lateral Cryphaea	<i>Cryphaea heteromalla</i>	
moss	Pointed Spear-moss	<i>Calliergonella cuspidata</i>	
moss	Rigid Beard-moss	<i>Didymodon rigidulus</i>	
moss	Rough-stalked Feather-moss	<i>Brachythecium rutabulum</i>	
moss	Silky Wall Feather-moss	<i>Homalothecium sericeum</i>	
moss	Silver-moss	<i>Bryum argenteum</i>	
moss	Springy Turf-moss	<i>Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus</i>	
moss	Thickpoint Grimmia	<i>Schistidium crassipilum</i>	



Species Group	Common Name	Species	Conservation Status
moss	Wall Screw-moss	<i>Tortula muralis</i>	
moss	Wood Bristle-moss	<i>Orthotrichum affine</i>	