



We have a number of items to report but would like to start by letting you know that Anne Murray has stepped down as Convenor of the CIEEM Irish Committee. Anne has had to resign due to personal family commitments. We are very sorry to lose Anne as she has been instrumental in guiding CIEEM in Ireland to date and was the force behind our successful All Ireland Conference last November. Anne was also behind the successful Appropriate Assessment Training Day held with the IPI in 2012. Anne was always a great resource due to her level of involvement and knowledge in the Ecological Sector. We are very thankful to Anne for all her hard work and wish her all the best.

Acting Convenor:

The Committee would like to welcome Dr. George Smith as the new Acting Convenor of the Irish Section Committee. George who was already on the Committee very nicely agreed to be co-opted and will be excellent in this position. George has been on the Committee for 5 years therefore will allow for a smooth transition and continuity in the Irish Section's objectives. George is one of just 3 Chartered Ecologists in Ireland. He has held two Open Source GIS training events for CIEEM in Ireland, the most recent in April last which was very well attended. George is also part of the Policy Review Group and was very involved in the preparation of the CIEEM submission to the Draft Peatlands Strategy and Draft Raised Bog Management Plan last month. He is always one of the first to help out with any event or work to be done so will be a great Convenor. George will be forwarded for election to the position at our next AGM.

AGM:

The Irish Section AGM will be held in November in Belfast (date to be confirmed) and we will be voting on a new Vice Convenor, Convenor and Ordinary Committee Positions. We would like membership to put forward nominations for these positions. I have attached information on what is required of the positions and what is involved in being a Committee member. The Committee would welcome new members to help move the good momentum forward and to bring in new views and opinions. Please email me if you are interested in any of the positions.

Annual Conference:

We will hold a one-day conference this year. It will have a Wetlands theme and will be held in Belfast. It will be held on the same day as the AGM therefore in November. We would like to ask members to submit titles of talks if they are willing to present at the conference. Please email me directly. We will notify members of a confirmed date as soon as possible.

Training:

Three training courses are going to be held over the coming months:

- Dr. Jo Denyer will host a one day course titled 'Introduction to Sphagnum Identification' at Clara Visitor Centre on June 25th. For further information please go to <http://www.cieem.net/events/712/introduction-to-sphagnum-identification>
- Dr. Fionnuala O Neill will be holding a one day training course on 'Introduction to Grass, Sedge and Rush identification' at Newbridge House and Farm, Donabate, Co. Dublin. This will be mid July. Membership will be notified of the date once it is confirmed.
- A Train the Trainer Course will be held in early Autumn. The CIEEM Irish Branch is eager to encourage accredited ecologists working in Ireland to engage in the delivery of the CIEEM training programme here in Ireland. Those attending the course who will be hosting training courses for CIEEM will get a further discounted rate to their already discounted CIEEM members training rate. Details will be sent to members once confirmed.

University Liaison:

One of the objectives for the Irish Section is to engage with ecology students in Irish Universities. This is to raise the profile of CIEEM, forge a link with Irish universities and to assist Irish students in identifying career paths once they leave university. We are looking for members to volunteer as speakers to students and to share their career profiles and journeys with these students. Ideally we are looking for those who already might be doing some lecturing in universities. Please contact me if you are interested.

Event Programme:

Our first informal event of the year was held at Bull Island in Raheny, Co. Dublin, last month. Despite the very wet and blustery conditions we had 6 members turn up and we were rewarded with an encounter with hundreds of Marsh Fritillary caterpillars as well as a great insight into the diverse ecology of the island by Dr. Mark McCorry.

We have decided to put together a sponsored Programme of Events in 2015 which members will receive at the start of the year. Our Secretary, Deborah D'Arcy will be making contact with the Event Co-ordination Group and will be working with membership on putting this programme together.

In the meantime, if any member has ideas on an event or fieldtrip they could host in their area, please let me know. We are looking for members to step forward and suggest local informal events around the country.



Front L-R: Paul Scott, Patricia Byrne, Katharine Duff, Mark McCorry and Roisin Ni Gfhloinn



L-R: Roisin Ni Gfhloinn, Katharine Duff, Mark McCorry, Paul Scott and Matthew Scott on shoulders!

Policy:

- Meeting with Minister Deenihan:

Jenny Neff (Vice President for Ireland), Anne Murray (Convenor Irish Section Committee) and Mairead Stack (Irish Section Support Officer) met with Minister Deenihan in May at the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. Also in attendance, from NPWS, were Conor O Raghallaigh and Cliona O'Brien. Minister Deenihan was very receptive to hearing about CIEEM and how it operates. Jenny Neff explained how CIEEM has achieved Chartered Status and described its structure and function. We cited examples of how CIEEM is a resource in the UK to DEFRA and Natural England and discussed some issues such as being involved at an earlier stage in policy or guidance drafts. A successful outcome of the meeting was an invitation for CIEEM to meet on a regular basis with DAHG as a consultee.

- Draft Peatlands Strategy and Draft Raised Bog Management Plan:

The Policy Review Group of the Irish Section submitted detailed responses to these draft Strategies in April. Copies of these submissions can be found at

http://www.cieem.net/data/files/Resource_Library/Policy/Consultation_Responses/CIEEM_Comment_on_draft_Peatland_Strategy_180414.pdf

And

http://www.cieem.net/data/files/Resource_Library/Policy/Consultation_Responses/CIEEM_Comment_on_draft_Raised_Bog_Management_Plan_180414.pdf