

# Irish Wildlife

the magazine of the Irish Wildlife Trust

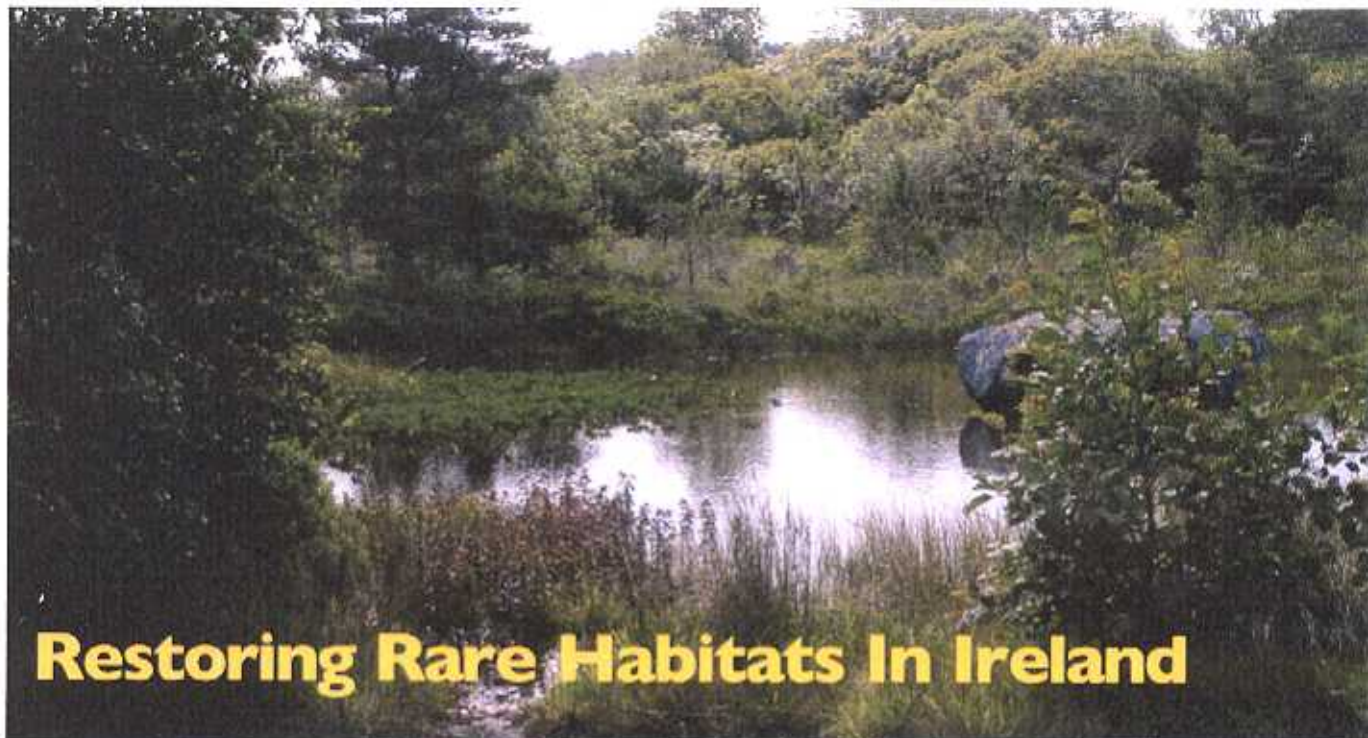


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## Reeves' Muntjac Deer Groundwork Conservation Volunteers





## Restoring Rare Habitats In Ireland

The largest component habitat under restoration is priority woodland associated with limestone pavement seen here at Site 1, Clonbur on the Galway/Mayo border

Coillte owns and manages over a million acres of land in Ireland, some of which is designated as special areas of conservation to protect rare habitats and species. Coillte manages its entire estate according to the principles of Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) which aims to balance three separate aspects of forest management; the economic, social and environmental, to develop and grow the State's forests in a way that is environmentally sensitive, socially beneficial and economically sustainable.

This management was first recognised by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) in May 2001 who awarded Coillte a certificate of good forest management in 2001 and which has been maintained to the present day with Coillte's certificate being reissued in 2006.

Coillte has been involved in priority habitat restoration under the EU LIFE Programme since 2002 and has been awarded a total of three LIFE-Nature projects on its estate: the first relating to the restoration of blanket bog, secondly the restoration of raised bog and thirdly a project targeting the restoration of priority woodland habitats. Each is one of the largest restoration projects of its kind to be undertaken in Ireland and represents more than 3,000 hectares where active restoration works are taking place.

### Restoring Priority Woodland Habitats

This project aims to remove non-native trees and invasive non-native shrubs allowing rare native woodland types to regenerate in future years. Natural water regimes are being reinstated on rare alluvial and bog woodlands. Priority Irish yew woodlands will be extended across the country by natural regeneration and planting of local native young yew trees. During the project life time, a significant improvement in woodland habitat quality is expected across some 550 hectares of priority woodland habitat.

### Restoring Active Blanket Bog in Ireland

Work began in 2002 on restoring blanket bog along the western seaboard of Ireland. On completion in 2007, close to 2000 hectares of this habitat was returned to a more favourable conservation status. The bog sites in this project are located in Special Areas of Conservation (SACs).

### Restoring Raised Bog in Ireland

The main objective of this four year project, finishing September 2008, is the restoration of 571 hectares of raised bog, spread across the Midlands of Ireland, to more favourable conservation status.



Sphagnum mosses begin to dominate the wet areas on the bogs and active peat formation will be restored over time.

### Bog Restoration

These bogs support many rare plants, animals and birds and are habitats of significant conservation value. Restoration works in both projects include removal of plantation forests, blocking of drains and protection of the bog sites. The main objective is to raise water levels sufficiently to allow sphagnum mosses, the peat forming mosses, to grow again on these bogs. Water levels and vegetation recovery have been monitored and recorded during the lifetime of the projects. The felling of trees and the blocking of drains have resulted in a marked increase in water levels on most project sites.

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## 'Art for Wildlife'

The IWT ran an Art for Wildlife competition, which was open to primary school students in the lead up to Biodiversity Week 2008. The competition was very successful with over 100 entries from all over Ireland. The artwork was amazing. We were hugely impressed by the many interpretations of the beauty in nature and young people's understanding of biodiversity issues. It was extremely difficult to choose a winner and we felt all entrants should be rewarded. All the artwork was exhibited for one week in ENFO and it will soon be on our website [www.iwt.ie](http://www.iwt.ie)

After much deliberation it was decided that the overall winner is: Aoife Gallagher Age 10 from Drogheda

Congratulations to Aoife and everyone who entered and on your wonderful artwork!



*Aoife's winning entry*

Thank you to: ENFO, Notice Nature and Dept. of Environment, Heritage and Local Government for their support.

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FORESTRY PANEL PRODUCTS LAND MANAGEMENT ENERGY



## LIFE-Nature Projects

Coillte has restored approx. 2,500 hectares of raised and blanket bogs as part of its commitment to biodiversity. Coillte has designated 15% of its estate to be managed primarily for biodiversity. They are listed as priority habitats for conservation under the EU Habitats Directive.

For further information about Blanket Bog Restoration and Raised Bog Restoration please log on to:

[www.irishbogrestorationproject.ie](http://www.irishbogrestorationproject.ie)

[www.raisedbogrestoration.ie](http://www.raisedbogrestoration.ie)

Coillte is also restoring four priority woodland habitats (yew woodland, alluvial woodland, bog woodland and woodland associated with limestone pavement).

For information on this project see:

[www.woodlandrestoration.ie](http://www.woodlandrestoration.ie)

The bog and woodland restoration projects are jointly funded by the European Union DG-Environment and Coillte under the EU LIFE-Nature Programme.

[www.coillte.ie](http://www.coillte.ie)

## Wildlife on...

Mapping Biodiversity  
**Biology.ie**

[www.biology.ie](http://www.biology.ie)

Use the Internet to tell us where you saw that butterfly, red squirrel, 1st flower of Spring, last rose of summer, badger road kill, bullfinch, lizard, newt and much more. Enrich our knowledge of Ireland's Biodiversity while walking, gardening or even driving that SUV!

Go to [www.biology.ie](http://www.biology.ie) and look at what our dedicated followers have been up to. Needs a broadband connection.