



trailHEAD

The Dublin Mountains Partnership Newsletter

Winter 2013 Issue



Dublin Mountains
Partnership

Welcome to Trailhead Winter 2013 Issue



Welcome to the 6th edition of the **Dublin Mountains Partnership newsletter**, We have been working very hard over the last few years with 2013 proving to be an exceptionally busy year as our articles will show.

Recreation sites across the Dublin Mountains have also seen new additions. One of these being the installation of a fully automated gate at the Hell Fire site, allowing access on a daily basis.

The new routes on our guided walks are becoming increasingly popular with many being fully booked out. The New Year's Day and St. Patrick's Day walks from Shankill to the Scalp Lookout have been very well attended.

Finally, the Dublin Mountains Partnership Facebook page has gone from strength to strength doubling its followers to over 800 'Likes'. With today's reliance on social media, it is proving to be an invaluable medium for keeping you all up to date with events on in the Dublin Mountains.

So please like us:



Dublin Mountains Way Brochure

The DMP has recently produced a free brochure on the Dublin Mountains Way, which is available at County Council offices, Tourist information offices and some outdoor retail outlets across the capital. The brochure includes a map outlining the route and various points of interest, along with information about Leave No Trace and advice for walkers.



A new brightly coloured 'DMW Badge' has also been produced for walkers who have completed the entire route or have attended one of our guided walks or just wish to help us promote the Dublin Mountains Way. If you are interested in one of these badges please send an email to info@dublinmountains.ie

FOREST FAMILY FUN DAY

15th September - Hell Fire Club Car Park

Despite the wind and showers, the 4th Free Forest Family Fun Day was a success, numbers were down but we had to compete with the Dublin Flight Fest.

The venue for this year was moved from Tibbradden to The Hell Fire car park, but we still maintained the full range of family activities which included den building, field archery (thanks to Greenhills Archery Club), tree identification, badger identification, log cutting using a cross-cutting saw, cone throwing, a blindfold rope trail, giant wood puzzle, slack line, and mountain biking.

Dale Treadwell from Naturally Wild and RTE jr provided information about bugs & insects, he also brought along Harry the Hedgehog (aka Scrappy), luckily Volunteer Ranger John's badger was stuffed because badgers like hedgehogs to eat.

Everyone had fantastic fun trying their hand at all sorts of forestry related activities. We will definitely be hosting the event next year, so pack some lunch, rain gear and have your wellies ready to join us for a great day in the mountains!



WATCHABLE WILDLIFE



'Watchable Wildlife' is a series of 12 new information signs dotted throughout the Dublin Mountains, these signs have been erected in areas where there is a likelihood of spotting the wildlife depicted on the sign.

The animals that have been chosen for this first round of signs are red grouse, badger, sika deer, jay and kestrel. You can find out more details on where the various signs are located on the activities page on the Dublin Mountains web site.

Wildlife Viewing Tips:

Helpful tips to become a wildlife friendly viewer. The secret is knowing where, when and what to look for.

Before you go:

- Take binoculars. Wildlife is viewed at a distance.
- Always check weather and road conditions.
- Never approach or feed animals.
- Please practice Leave No Trace.

Watching & listening on site:

- Watch and listen at dawn and dusk.
- Keep your distance, use binoculars.
- Stay quiet.
- Try to blend into an animal's surroundings.
- Do not feed wildlife.
- Look for signs that animals have been nearby: tracks, droppings, nuts that are gnawed or half eaten, bark nibbled off trees, holes or nests in trees.

Happy Watching!



TIBRADDEN HIKE

A report by Ciara Horan, TY student, Muckross Park College, Donnybrook, Dublin 4.

Earlier in October rangers from the Dublin Mountain Partnership came to give a talk to us, the TY students of Muckross Park College. They made a convincing case, telling us about the wonderful trails and mountains right on our doorstep, and when they kindly offered to bring us on a hike we all eagerly accepted.

On a Saturday morning in November the peace and quiet of Tibradden Wood was broken as the car-park was swarmed by Muckross students in varying states of readiness. There were the expert mountaineers with their worn hiking boots, the newly converted with a range of inappropriate footwear that was ruined during the course of the afternoon, and the way-too-prepared with over-sized packs that held just about everything but the kitchen sink. Because there were so many of us we split into three groups and in no time were marching into the woods.

We wasted no time in starting a sing-song which the unfortunate rangers had to endure for most of the hike; however they did so very good-naturedly.

We soon came to a court cairn, which is a type of Neolithic tomb. The rangers explained that it was only a reconstruction as the actual tomb had been damaged during an archaeological excavation.

From our viewing point we could also see the Hellfire Club which has many ghostly myths surrounding it that were told to us by the rangers. During this stop we learned about the history of Tibradden and that the name comes from the Irish 'Teach Bruadain' (house of Bruadain).

Many water breaks and songs later we arrived at the top of Ticknock, absolutely delighted with ourselves. Here there are the remains of the 'Fairycastle' which is a prehistoric passage tomb. Our lunch stop was about a half hour walk away where we gratefully sat down to our lunches and were offered some delicious homemade cereal bars by the kind rangers.

We arrived back at the car park in one piece. All in all the walk took us about three hours. We are all extremely grateful to the DMP rangers for a brilliant hike which we all enjoyed and I am sure that this was not the last the Dublin Mountains will see of us.

Important Visit



In the first half of 2013 Ireland held the Presidency of the Council of the European Union and as part of this hosted several important visits.

One of these visits was for senior officials from the European forestry industry. Coillte and the Dublin Mountains Partnership were requested to host a field trip by The Department of Agriculture and The Forest Service.

It was an ideal opportunity to showcase the work carried out by the DMP and what has been achieved in a relatively short space of time.

The site chosen was Three Rock but due to very bad weather conditions on the day plan 'B' was put into action and the alternative site of Barnaslingan was used. The visit included presentations on trail maintenance, harvesting practices, 'Watchable Wildlife', the Dublin Mountains Way and the DMP Volunteer Ranger Service.

Zipit Forest Adventures



Zipit was Ireland's first high-wire aerial forest adventure situated in Lough Key Forest Park, Boyle, Co. Roscommon. Following on from the success of Lough Key they opened their second course in the Dublin Mountains in April 2013, bringing their adrenaline-pumping, high wire trail to the fabulous pine forest of Tibbradden Wood.

Zipit engineers have built platforms on trees at various heights (ranging from 1 metre to 20 metres off the ground) and connected them with a range of activities to allow the participant move from one tree to another.

At the beginning you are fitted with a harness to ensure your safety and qualified instructors give you a short initiation course to explain the features of the course and equipment (and to make sure you know what you're doing). There are five different circuits, with each circuit getting a little bit more challenging than the previous one but you probably won't even notice this as you move along, activity by activity. Climb poles and climbing walls, swing into cargo nets, balance on a rope bridge, hurtle down a zipwire, even ride a BMX across a treetop bridge!

From beginners to adrenaline junkies, Zipit will show you how to make your day a fun-filled, thrilling experience in a healthy, outdoor setting - push yourself

that little bit further with guidance and encouragement from the instructors, knowing that you are secure in your harness.

Be prepared for 3-4 hours of adrenaline-fuelled fun as each activity builds your confidence, and while you are swinging through the trees, enjoy the spectacular views of Dublin City and Ireland's Eye. Zipit Tibbradden offers a different experience to Lough Key, with tall straight pine trees giving an illusion of even more height when you are traversing the obstacles.

Is it for adults or children - Both! Different circuits cater for different heights, ages and abilities. Families can complete circuits together or parents can monitor kids from the ground. This is the perfect outdoor activity for children age 7 upwards to adults of all ages.



For more details check out the Zipit website www.zipit.ie



Volunteer Ranger Contribution

The DMP Volunteer Rangers play a vital part in the success of the DMP and are greatly valued. Since the DMP began they have volunteered more than 10000 hours of their free time, patrolling the mountains, opening / closing car parks, helping out at events and guiding free walks for the public. Volunteering even when mother nature sends snow storms and heat waves in the same year.

In acknowledgement of this we have launched some recognition pins, these pins have been given to the rangers when they have reached 250 hours of volunteering. A handful of rangers have also received the 500 hour pin. A huge round of respect and appreciation is due for this vital work and for the contribution of so much of their free time.

We also have a 'Volunteer Thanks' pin that is awarded to people that help us out in the DMP at events or by doing other duties that might arise where volunteer help is required.

Ticks and Lyme Disease

Lyme disease is a bacterial infection that is spread to humans by infected ticks.

Ticks are small, spider-shaped creatures that feed on the blood of mammals, including humans. The ticks that cause Lyme disease are commonly found in woodland and heathland areas. This is because these types of habitats have a high number of tick-carrying animals, such as deer, mice and sheep.

Lyme disease is not a common infection. It is estimated that there are between 50 and 100 cases in Ireland each year.

The most common symptom of Lyme disease is a red skin rash that looks similar to a bull's eye on a dart board. There is a widely held misconception that the outlook for Lyme disease is poor and that the condition cannot be treated. This is not the case.

The best way to prevent getting Lyme disease is to be aware of the risks when you visit areas where ticks are likely to be found, and to take sensible precautions.



You can reduce the risk of infection by:

- Being aware of ticks and which areas they normally live in.
- Wearing appropriate clothing in tick-infested areas (a long-sleeve shirt and trousers tucked into your socks).
- Using insect repellents,
- Inspecting your skin for ticks, particularly at the end of the day, including your head, neck, and skin folds (armpits, groin, and waistband).
- Making sure that your children's head and neck areas, including scalps, are properly checked.
- Checking that ticks are not brought home on your clothes.
- Checking that pets do not bring ticks into your home in their fur.

For further information on Lyme disease visit the [HSE website](#) and browse the [Health A-Z section](#).

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