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Partnership

# LISMORE BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

2023 – 2033

Lismore  
Tidy Towns



# Introduction

The Lismore Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) has been developed by Lismore Tidy Towns in collaboration with Cork Nature Network and with the assistance of LEADER funding support from Waterford Leader Partnership.

The aim of the BAP is to provide a framework to guide projects and tasks over the next decade to facilitate the Tidy Towns group to build on the biodiversity work they have already carried out in the town in the most effective and efficient way.

In order to record an ecological baseline and to inform Lismore-specific recommendations, Cork Nature Network's team of ecologists visited Lismore a number of times in spring of 2023, to map habitats and conduct surveys on trees, birds, plants, insects and the riparian zone.

Through the development of the plan Lismore Tidy Towns hopes to also increase awareness locally of the value of biodiversity and to grow connections and foster cooperation within the community on projects that help protect and promote biodiversity. As part of the development of the BAP Lismore Tidy Towns and Cork Nature Network hosted awareness raising and educational walks on birds, woodlands and food foraging in the Spring/Summer and invited the community to share their opinions and ideas for nature in Lismore.

## What is Biodiversity?

Biodiversity refers to the variety of living organisms that inhabit a specific ecosystem, and it includes all species of plants, animals, fungi, and microorganisms.

Biodiversity is important because it plays a critical role in maintaining the health of our planet. It provides us with a variety of resources such as food, medicine, and building materials. Biodiversity also helps to regulate the Earth's climate, air quality, and water quality. Additionally, it supports the natural processes that make our planet habitable for humans and other species. Protecting biodiversity means protecting the delicate balance of our ecosystems, which is essential for our survival and the survival of many other species.

## What is a Biodiversity Action Plan?

A Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) is a framework document that sets out achievable targets and actions and aims to protect, conserve and promote the biodiversity of a specific area. A BAP is designed to identify the habitats, species and wildlife corridors within the area, assess the threats to their survival, and develop specific strategies to address those threats.

The goal of a biodiversity action plan is to ensure that the natural resources of a given area are used sustainably, and that the ecological balance within the ecosystem is maintained. This can involve a range of activities, such as habitat restoration, species conservation, and the implementation of sustainable land use practices.

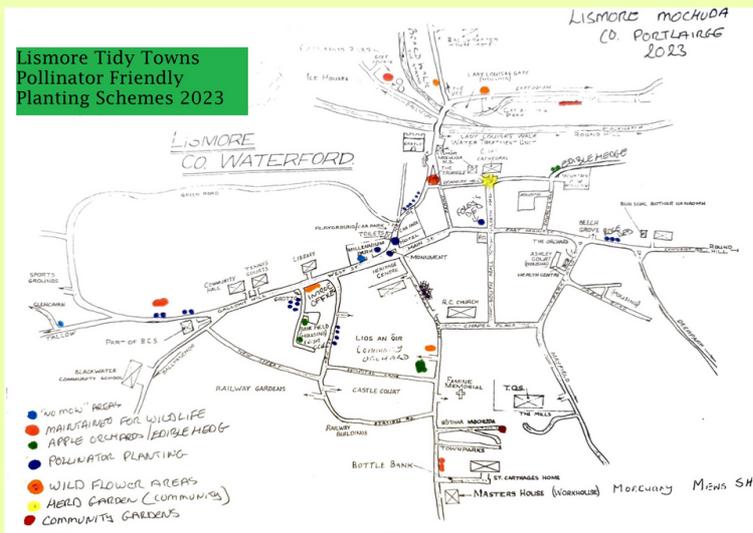
Ultimately, a successful biodiversity action plan requires the cooperation and participation of a variety of stakeholders, including local communities, conservation organizations, and government agencies. By working together and implementing the strategies outlined in the plan, we can help to protect and conserve the incredible diversity.

# Lismore Tidy Towns Working for Biodiversity

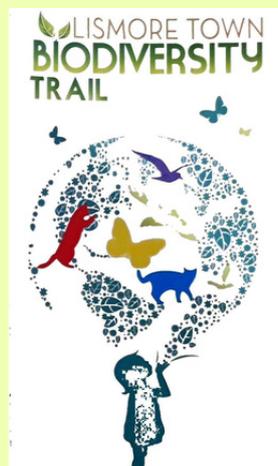
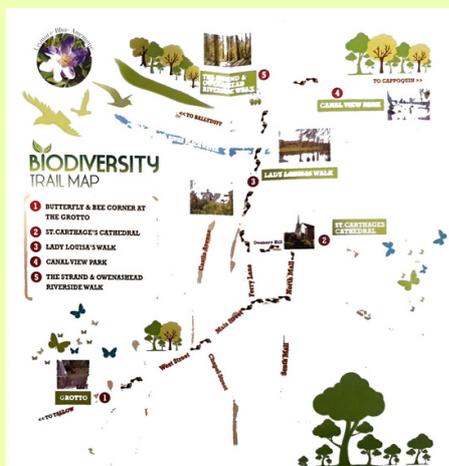
Lismore Tidy Towns is committed to promoting and protecting biodiversity in the local community. They have implemented a wide range of initiatives, such as reducing pollution, education, using native plant species, incorporating pollinator-friendly perennial planting schemes, promoted awareness-raising of habitats for wildlife with the launch of the Lismore Town Biodiversity Trail, engaged ecologists to carry out habitat mapping in 2014, bird, botany and bat surveys and undertaken works to monitor and control invasive species like Winter heliotrope and Japanese knotweed, launching a pollinator friendly grass-mowing regime, short wildflower meadows, installed a biodiversity themed living wall art piece and much more.

All these efforts go along way to enhance the biodiversity of the area and improve the quality of life for residents.

The next decade and the development of the Lismore Biodiversity Action Plan provides opportunities to explore an even more ambitious vision for Lismore with an emphasis on connectivity and whole systems thinking.



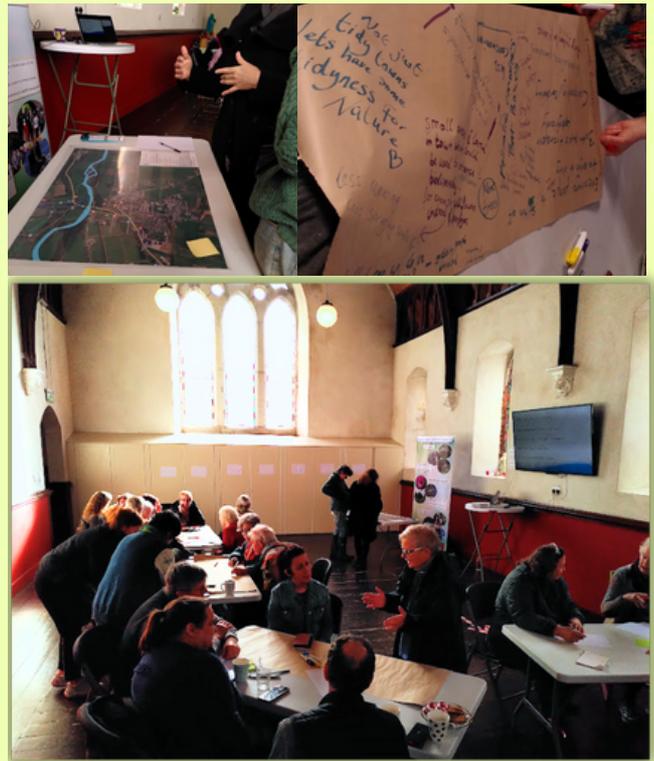
**Pollinator-friendly planting schemes** implemented by Tidy Towns aim to provide habitats for pollinators such as bees, butterflies, and moths. Planting native wildflowers, herbs, and shrubs that provide nectar, pollen, refuge and shelter throughout the year. The plants are selected based on their suitability for the local climate and soil, and are arranged in a way that promotes a diverse range of habitats for pollinators. Tidy Towns plan to continue to grow and expand the pollinator-friendly planting schemes while incorporating connectivity and pollinator corridors at the heart of their design, helping to support the local ecosystem and improve the quality of life for residents.



## Lismore Town Biodiversity Trail

# Developing the BAP

**A community information and open forum** event was facilitated by Cork Nature Network and Lismore Tidy Towns in February 2023 to gather ideas from the wider Lismore community about how to promote and protect biodiversity in the area. The event was well-attended and provided an opportunity for community members to share their thoughts and ideas about what can be done to enhance the local ecosystem. The ideas harvested ranged from creating more habitats for wildlife to reducing pollution and promoting sustainable practices. The event was a great success, with many valuable insights and suggestions shared



# Awareness Raising

Two free public events were hosted by Cork Nature Network in partnership with Lismore Tidy Towns as part of National Biodiversity Week in May 2023. These were an early morning bird chorus walk and a woodland nature walk and aimed to raise awareness and encourage community participation in the design of the Lismore Biodiversity Action Plan.



# Ecological Surveys

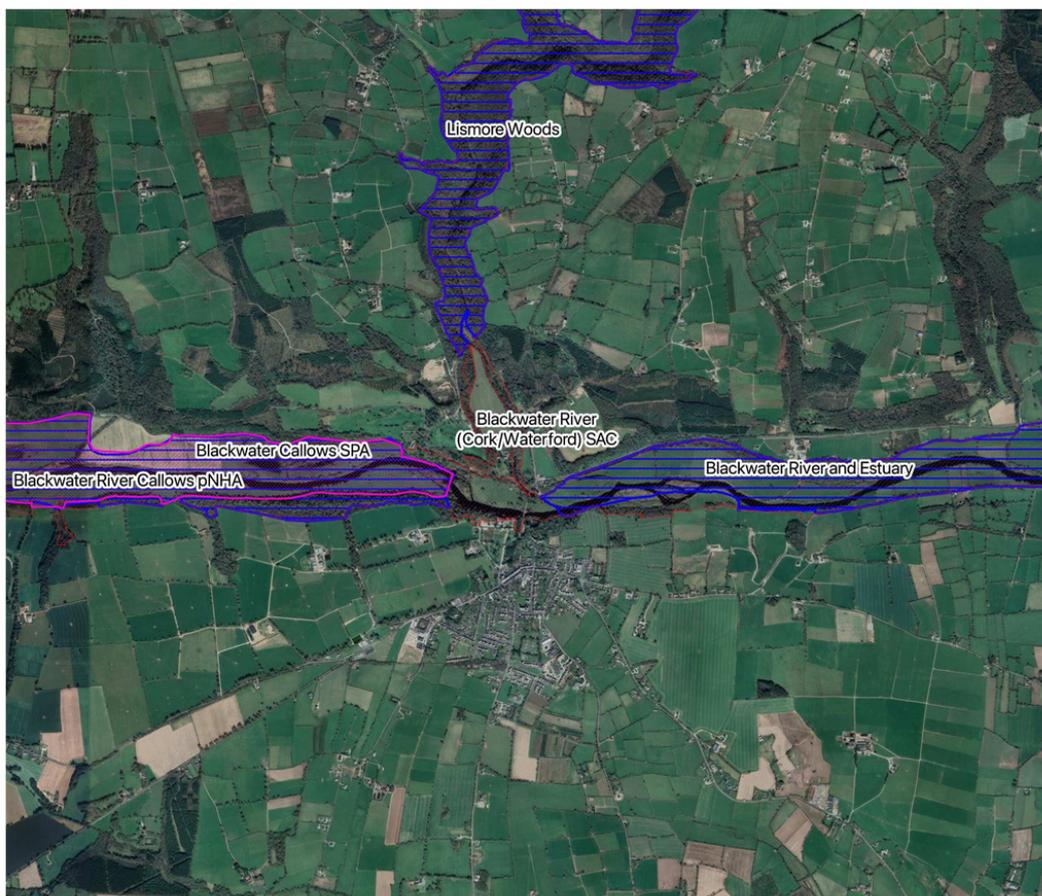
Cork Nature Network's ecologists carried out surveys across three locations, including Lady Louisa's Walk, Grounds of St Carthage's Cathedral, and Owenashad River walk. Their reports provided species lists and recommendations for biodiversity protection, habitat restoration, and the control of non-native species. These recommendations informed the targeted actions identified in this plan.

# About Lismore

The town of Lismore, in West County Waterford, is located in the Blackwater valley, to the south of the river and at the foot of the Knockmealdown Mountains, with a population of less than 1500. Renowned for its historic and cultural significance, with Lismore Castle, a medieval fortress with landscaped gardens, and St. Carthage's Cathedral, an ancient religious site. Its location along the River Blackwater also makes it a hub for outdoor activities like fishing, hiking, and enjoying the natural beauty of County Waterford. Lismore and its surrounding area offer several scenic walking trails and there is a variety of woodlands in the environs of the town.

## Protected Areas:

There are two protected areas close to the site, the Blackwater River (Cork/Waterford) SAC that runs past the town and the Blackwater Callows SPA about 400 m west of the town. The Blackwater River and its surrounding area have been designated a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) under the EU Habitats Directive. The SAC designation recognises the importance of the area's natural habitats and species, including the river and surrounding wetlands and forests. The Blackwater River is important for its salmon and trout populations, which are among the healthiest in Ireland. The river is home to several rare and protected species, including the freshwater pearl mussel and the otter. The river also provides habitat for many bird species, including the kingfisher, dipper, and heron.



## Lismore Protected Areas

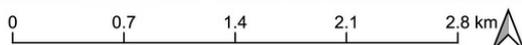
### Legend

- Special Protection Areas
- Special Area of Conservation
- Proposed Natural Heritage Areas

This map was created for the Lismore Biodiversity Action Plan 2023.

Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) are designated under the EU Habitats and Birds Directives.

Natural Heritage Areas are designated under the Irish Wildlife Amendment Act (2000). Additionally, proposed NHAs (pNHAs) are not statutorily proposed or designated but are recognised as sites of significance for wildlife and habitats.



Sources: Google Satellite, NPWS



May 2023

# Lismore Habitat Map

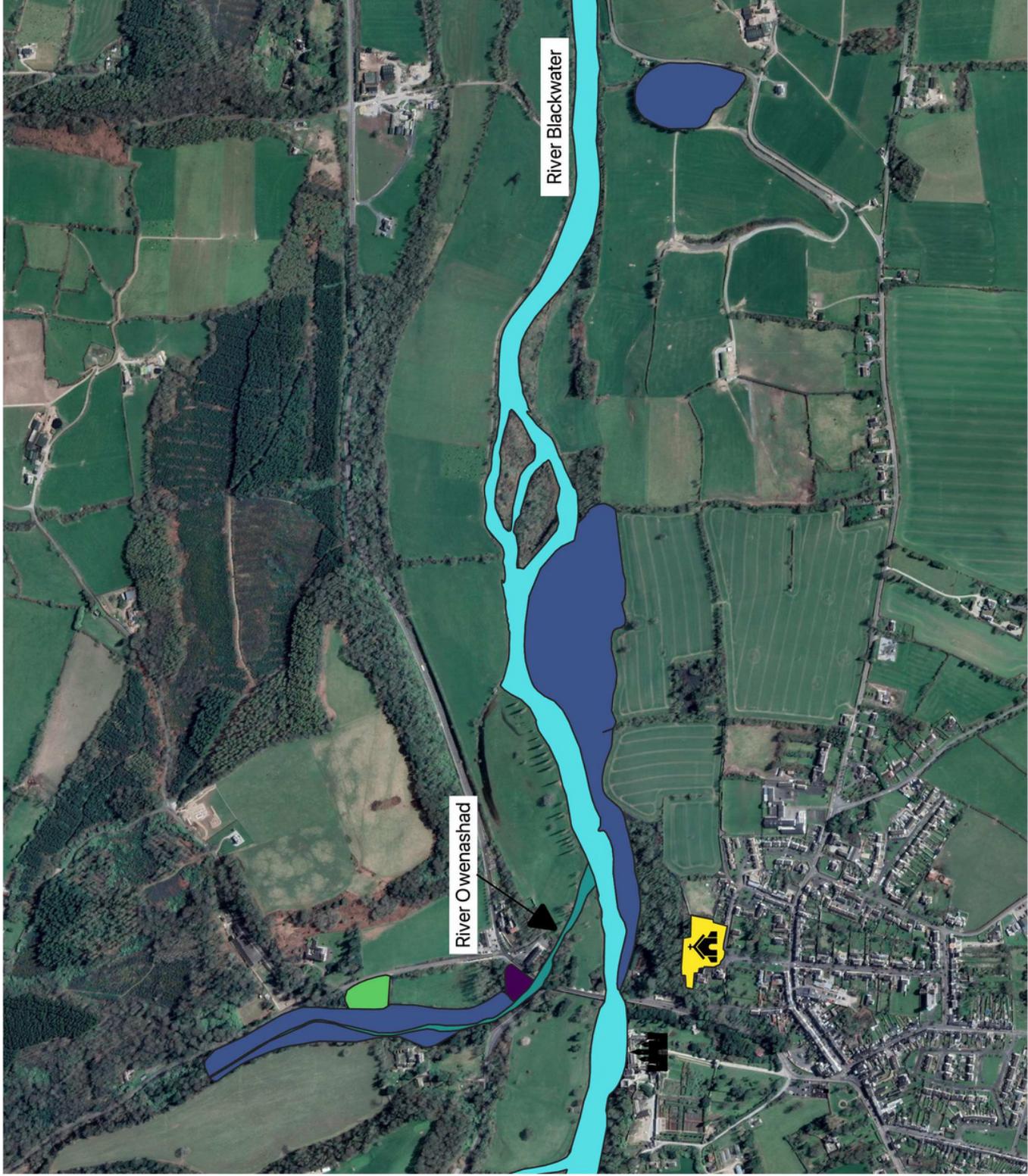
## Lismore Habitats

- WD5 Scattered trees and parkland
- WD1 Mixed broadleaved woodland
- FW2 Depositing/lowland river
- ED3 Recolonising bare ground
- BC4 Flower beds and borders
- FW2 Depositing/lowland river

This map was created for the Lismore Biodiversity Action Plan 2023. Fossitt mapping of key areas was conducted in Spring 2023. Rivers represented on this map are those that overlap with the particular survey areas.



June 2023



Sources: Google Satellite, Cork Nature Network Surveys

# Citizen Science Actions

## The role of Citizen Science

Citizen science is a powerful tool that engages ordinary individuals in scientific research and data collection. It's gained momentum and proving to be of immense value. This collaborative approach to scientific research allows the public to actively contribute to important scientific projects, promoting a sense of ownership and pride in our natural environment and heritage.

With its diverse ecosystems, the landscape around Lismore offers a unique opportunity for its residents to contribute to the monitoring and protection of Irish flora and fauna.

Citizen science has the potential to significantly enhance biodiversity conservation efforts but it also has a positive impact on public engagement and education. Involving citizens in scientific research fosters a sense of curiosity and appreciation for the natural world and promotes active citizenship and environmental stewardship. It offers opportunities for people of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities to actively participate in scientific research.

To protect and conserve biodiversity it is important to understand how it is changing. The National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC) monitors changes through its citizen science programmes that generate quality data to track changes in Ireland's species and habitats.

The Centre works to complement the National Parks and Wildlife Service's (NPWS) work in tracking changes in protected species. The NBDC relies on the recording community to participate in its initiatives to better understand Ireland's biodiversity and identify conservation priorities.

By contributing and participating in these initiatives Lismore Tidy Towns and the wider community can make a significant contribution to better understand how both Lismore's and Ireland's biodiversity is changing and thereby help to identify conservation priorities.

Cork Nature Network strongly recommends that all data recorded be submitted to the [National Biodiversity Data Centre](#).

Actions in this section, from training, to monitoring, to wildlife-corridor mapping and more, all aim to empower individuals to contribute to the wider data and make informed decisions locally.

No.	Action	Location	Stakeholders	Year
1	<p>Work with Community Water Officer from Local Authority Waters Programme (LAWPRO) to create a <b>Citizen Science initiative to monitor water quality</b>. Community training to conduct kick sampling <a href="mailto:aphelan@lawaters.ie">aphelan@lawaters.ie</a> <a href="#">More Info</a></p>	Owenashad & River Blackwater	Lawpro Tidy Towns Waterford County Council Lismore Angling Clubs	2024 to 2034
2	<p>Investigate potential to work with LAWPRO Community Water Officer to run <b>youth education programs on water quality</b> in schools. See <a href="#">A Guide for Community Groups working with Water, Biodiversity &amp; Climate</a> for info on LEADER funded projects</p>	Local schools	Blackwater Community School Bun Scoil Bhothar Na Naomh Scoil Liósmor Mochuda Tidy Towns	2024 to 2029
3	<p>Continue to take part in the <b>All Ireland Daubenton's Bat Waterways Survey</b> May to September. (Andrew Malcolm). Free training available <a href="#">More Info</a></p>	Lady Louisa's Walkway	Bat Conservation Ireland Tidy Towns	2024 to 2034
4	<p>Conduct <b>dark-sky bat and invertebrate audit</b> to identify key bat and moth corridors like Lady Louisa Walk to inform appropriate public lighting choices</p>	Lady Louisa Walkway St Carthage's Cathedral	Tidy Towns Community Foundation Ireland <a href="#">More Info</a>	2024 to 2027
5	<p><b>Conduct invertebrate surveys</b> across extended season. Acquire equipment for citizen science recording e.g. sweeping net, moth trap for community use</p>	Lady Louisa Walk Owennashad River Walk	INJ Grant Scheme <a href="#">More Info</a> Tidy Towns	2025 to 2028
6	<p><b>Map hedgerows</b> in Lismore to identify biodiversity corridors with aerial drone.</p>	Lismore town & environs	Tidy Towns County Council	TBC

No.	Action	Location	Stakeholders	Year
7	<p><b>Annual Five Visit Butterfly Monitoring Scheme</b>  Volunteers walk fixed route 5 times per year counting all butterflies. 2 walks completed between 22nd April - 16th June, 3 walks between 1st July - 31st August.</p>	<p>Lady Louisa Walkway, Round Hill, Owenashad River Walk  Other areas as identified.</p>	<p>Tidy Towns and volunteers  NBDC  <a href="#">Information</a></p>	<p>2024 to 2034</p>
8	<p><b>Investigate the potential for carrying out the following actions</b></p>			
8a	<p><b>Flower-Insect Timed Count (FIT Count)</b> Simple and useful tool to monitor effectiveness of pollinator friendly actions year on year  Carry out April 1st- Sept 30th</p>	<p>Locations of new pollinator friendly planting schemes</p>	<p>Tidy Towns  NBDC  Fit Count APP free  <a href="#">Information</a></p>	<p>2024 to 2034</p>
8b	<p><b>Rare Plant Monitoring</b> for species e.g. Lathraea squamaria (Toothwort), Trichomanes speciosum (Killarney Fern) -Submit a <i>casual record</i> of rare plant to NBDC, visit plant population yearly during flowering - count total no. - help identify early warning signs</p>	<p>Lady Louisa's Walkway  Owenashad Riverwalk  Lismore Woods</p>	<p>Tidy Towns  NBDC  <a href="#">Information</a></p>	<p>2024 to 2034</p>
8c	<p><b>Hedgehog Survey</b> using footprint tunnels. No specialist training required - simple footprint tunnel can be made at home/in school. 1st June-30th September</p>	<p>Lismore Towns and Environs</p>	<p>Tidy Towns  Local Schools  <a href="#">Irish Hedgehog Survey NUIG</a></p>	<p>2024 to 2034</p>
8d	<p><b>Submit Otter records</b>  Submit a photograph of the animal, spraint or tracks with your record if you have any. Contribute to the National Otter Study, ATU Galway</p>	<p>River Blackwater  Owenashad</p>	<p>Tidy Towns  NBDC  <a href="#">Information</a></p>	<p>2024 to 2034</p>
8e	<p><b>Wild Honey Bee Survey</b> Register colonies &amp; act as custodians - keep NUIG Bee Research informed of their health and survival.</p>	<p>Lismore town &amp; environs</p>	<p>Tidy Towns  <a href="#">Information</a></p>	<p>2024 to 2034</p>

# Actions for Insects



Insect biodiversity is vital to our ecosystem as they play a critical role in pollination, soil health, nutrient cycling and are an important food source for birds, bats and other animals. Without them, the entire ecosystem is thrown out of balance.

One of the primary contributions of insect biodiversity is pollination. Insects like bees, butterflies, and hoverflies play a vital role in the pollination of flowering plants, including crops. This process ensures the reproduction of plants, helps maintain genetic diversity, and yields abundant fruits, vegetables, and seeds.

Insects also serve as decomposers, breaking down organic matter and recycling nutrients back into the soil. They play a crucial role in the decomposition of dead plants and animals, which is essential for nutrient cycling in ecosystems.

Moreover, insects are an important food source for many other animals, including birds, bats, and reptiles. Their abundance and diversity provide a stable food chain, supporting the survival and reproduction of higher trophic levels.

In 2019, an NBDC study found that one-third of Ireland's bee species were facing extinction due to habitat loss, pesticide use, and climate change. It also found that many other insect species, like butterflies and moths, were in significant decline. These populations declining at an alarming rate could have disastrous consequences for Ireland's ecosystem. It is crucial to take measures to protect insect biodiversity by reducing herbicide & pesticide use, preserving habitats, and promoting sustainable agricultural practices.

All Ireland Pollinator Plan has a huge range of resources to help community groups, businesses, landowners and individuals to take action for pollinators.

<https://pollinators.ie/resources/>

Cork Nature Network has a project 'Valuing Insects' aiming to raise awareness on the connections between insects and the rest of the living world, to show how habitat management can be improved for insects, and to develop materials to show how insect groups are important and to try to make them more appealing and charismatic to the general public. To find out more visit [corknaturenetwork.ie](http://corknaturenetwork.ie)

The actions for insects in this plan aim to protect a wide range of invertebrates, their food sources, shelter and habitats in Lismore including but not limited to pollinating insects.



No.	Action	Location	Stakeholders	Year
1	Introduce <b>small native trees and shrubs</b> that will attract and support insects. Rowan, Elderberry, Holly, Hazel, and Berberis, Mahonia, and Buddleia, Crab apple and Broom and the school next door could be involved in the planting.	St Carthage's Cathedral	Tidy Towns Cathedral Eco Group Waterford City & County Council	2024 to 2034
2	<b>Leave dead wood.</b> Decaying timber is a natural habitat for many species of insects and their larva. Logs stacked along the walkway are ideal mini habitats and also potential homes for frogs and hedgehogs.	Lady Louisa Walkway St Carthage's Owennashad Other locations	Tidy Towns Cathedral Eco Group Waterford City & County Council	2024 to 2034
3	<b>Create Solitary bee hotels.</b> Many species of bees use holes in timber to lay their eggs in. Tree stumps drilled with a variety of holes creating mini habitats for bees. More stumps could be placed along the walkway. In progress	Lady Louisa Walkway St Carthage's Owennashad Lismore & Environs	Lismore Tidy Towns. Community Volunteers Native Irish Honey bee association	2024 to 2034
4	Continue to build on <b>pollinator friendly planting</b> carried out by Lismore Tidy Towns and continue to work with Local Authority to implement pollinator friendly management plans for Lismore Town & Environs	Lismore Town & Environs	Lismore Tidy Towns Lismore Residents Waterford City & County Council	2024 to 2034
5	Continue to map the pollinator friendly planting zones year-on-year to <b>map the connectivity of pollinator corridors</b> within the town and connecting to surrounding landscape.	Lismore Town & Environs	Lismore Tidy Towns Lismore Residents Waterford City & County Council	2024 to 2034
6	Install solitary bee houses on south facing sites in any sunny position	St Carthage's Cathedral	Tidy Towns Cathedral Eco Group	2024 to 2034

No.	Action	Location	Stakeholders	Year
7	<p>Retain cut wood from reducing Lawson Cypress onsite (see action for trees) as <b>dead-wood habitats</b>. Stack wood in an inaccessible area and label to discourage being moved.</p>	St Carthage's Cathedral	St Carthage's Cathedral Eco Group Tidy Towns Council	2025 to 2028
8	<p>Establish grass maintenance regime to allow wildflowers to develop without making maintenance unmanageable e.g. cut areas alternately, only cut some areas once or twice a year</p>	St Carthage's Cathedral	St Carthage's Cathedral Tidy Towns	
9	<p>Continue to avoid the use of <b>harmful pesticides and herbicides</b>, especially in areas where insects are most active. Use natural methods of weed control, manual removal, mulching, application of vinegar etc For control of pests use natural methods e.g. soapy water solution, Diatomaceous earth, companion planting and manual removal.</p>	Areas managed by Tidy Towns Areas managed by Council	Tidy Towns Council Local Residents groups	2024 to 2034
10	<p>Where possible avoid using <b>non-native plants</b> in planting schemes that may not provide food or habitat for local insects. See <a href="#">HERE</a> for 10 non-native ornamental but pollinator-friendly perennial bulbs that are recommended by the <a href="#">All Ireland Pollinator Plan</a></p>	Areas managed by Tidy Towns Areas managed by Council	Tidy Towns Council Local Residents Groups	2024 to 2034
11	<p><b>Awareness Raising</b> Use Lismore Tidy Towns social media pages to help disseminate useful information on pollinator friendly practices in home gardens/ schools e.g. <b><i>Gardens: Actions to help Pollinators</i></b> <b><i>Pledge your Garden for Pollinators</i></b></p>	Weekly newspaper notes. Awareness days signage Information leaflets. School Liaisons	Tidy Towns School Liaison officers	2024 to 2034



# Actions for Birds

Birds hold immense value in our world. Ecologically, they are nature's gardeners, pollinating flowers and distributing seeds, promoting plant growth and biodiversity. They serve as pest controllers, helping to manage insect populations and controlling rodent populations. Birds also offer crucial indicators of environmental health, signaling changes in ecosystems.

Beyond their ecological roles, their songs and vibrant plumage bring joy and inspiration to people, helping to foster a deeper connection to nature.

The swift population in Lismore holds a special place in many people's heart. Our ecologists also noted the presence of woodpeckers on Lady Louisa's walk along with Barn Owls by the strand and many more species in the Lismore environs.

Cork Nature Network bird expert visited Lismore in Spring and early summer and recorded Barn Owl, Blackbird, Blackcap, Blue Tit, Bullfinch, Chaffinch, Chiffchaff, Coal Tit, Collared Dove, Cormorant, Dipper, Dunnock, Goldcrest, Goldfinch, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Great Tit, Grey Heron, Grey Wagtail, Hooded Crow, House Martin, House Sparrow, Jackdaw, Kingfisher, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Lesser Redpoll, Little Egret, Long-tailed Tit, Magpie, Mallard, Pheasant, Pied/White Wagtail, Raven, Reed Bunting, Robin, Rook, Sand Martin, Song Thrush, Starling, Stock Dove, Swallow, Swift, Treecreeper, Willow Warbler, Woodpigeon and Wren.

Four of these are red listed species (high conservation concern) on the Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland; Barn Owl, Grey Wagtail, Stock dove and Swift, while a further eight species are on the amber list (medium conservation concern).

Birds offer immeasurable cultural and economic value through Eco-tourism, bird-watching and the sheer joy they bring to people's lives.

However, bird populations face challenges, including habitat loss, climate change, and agricultural practices. Conservation efforts, habitat restoration, and sustainable land use practices all help in safeguarding the diversity of avian species.

The following actions will be carried out to try to help ensure that future generations can enjoy the wonder of bird life in and around Lismore.



No.	Action	Location	Stakeholders	Year
1	<p><b>Identify sites for Barn Owl nest box(es)</b></p> <p>BirdWatch Ireland provide nest boxes as part of a local nest box scheme where the site is confirmed to be suitable. More Info</p>	<p>Biodiversity Trail/suitable locations in Lismore (particularly a quiet shed or barn)</p>	<p><u>BirdWatch Ireland</u>  <u>Barn Owl Conservation</u>  <u>Officer Alan McCarthy</u>  Tidy Towns</p>	<p>2024 to 2026</p>
2	<p>Explore the potential to carry out an owl survey of the castle and surrounds in collaboration with the barn owl conservation officer for BWI. 2 Barn owls were recorded at the Strand during bird survey</p>	<p>Owennashad Lismore Castle Surrounds. Lismore town &amp; environs</p>	<p>BirdWatch Ireland  Barn Owl Conservation  Officer  Tidy Towns</p>	<p>2024 to 2026</p>
3	<p>Monitor Swift sites and update records from the <u>Swift Survey report on Lismore 2019</u> 16 nesting sites were recorded in Lismore</p>	<p>Recorded Sites on Survey and any new sites in Lismore town &amp; environs</p>	<p><u>Swift Conservation Ireland</u>  Tidy Towns  <u>Birdwatch Ireland</u>  Saving Swifts Guide</p>	<p>2024 to 2026</p>
4	<p>Install Swift nest boxes in suitable sites. Nest boxes can be installed to provide more nest sites at an established nesting colony or to create a new nesting site.</p>	<p>Identify appropriate sites with guidance from BWI</p>	<p><u>Swift Conservation Ireland</u>  Tidy Towns  <u>Birdwatch Ireland</u>  Saving Swifts Guide</p>	<p>2024 to 2026</p>
5	<p>Install a Swift calling system to attract Swifts and encourage them to take up residence at a new site</p>	<p>At Swift box sites</p>	<p><u>Swift Conservation Ireland</u>  Tidy Towns  <u>Birdwatch Ireland</u>  Saving Swifts Guide</p>	<p>2024 to 2026</p>
6	<p>Woodpeckers present. Leave fallen wood in-situ, and standing dead wood to provides nesting habitat for the species.</p>	<p>Lady Louisa's Walk</p>	<p>Tidy Towns  Lismore Heritage Company</p>	<p>2024 to 2034</p>

# Actions for Trees

Woodlands support a wide array of plant and animal species, making them vital hubs of ecological diversity. Native tree species like oak, birch, and Scots pine provide essential habitats for numerous wildlife, including insects, birds, mammals, and fungi. These woodlands also host a rich understorey of plants, mosses, and lichens, further enhancing their biodiversity.

Irish woodlands serve as strongholds for endangered and vulnerable species, such as the red squirrel, pine marten, and certain bat species. They act as wildlife corridors, facilitating genetic diversity and helping species adapt to changing climates. Moreover, woodlands contribute to carbon sequestration, soil health, and air and water purification.

The woodlands around Lismore, offer diverse ecosystems with varying degrees of biodiversity value. These include The Towers, once part of the woodland of Ballysaggartmore House, contains mixed native and non-native tree species and pockets of native woodland habitat, The Grove, west of Lismore Castle and partly on the site of possible ancient woodland, has mixed broad leaved woodland, while Lismore Woods and Owenashad River encompasses diverse habitats, scored 'excellent' by the National Survey of Native Woodlands.

Lismore river walk is a vital ecological corridor linking river habitats. Round Hill exhibits mixed broadleaved/conifer woodland with valuable ground cover. Lismore canal has a linear alluvial woodland with diverse riparian species. Glenribbeen Wood represents an upland acid oak woodland rich in native flora. These woodlands collectively contribute to the region's biodiversity and environmental importance.

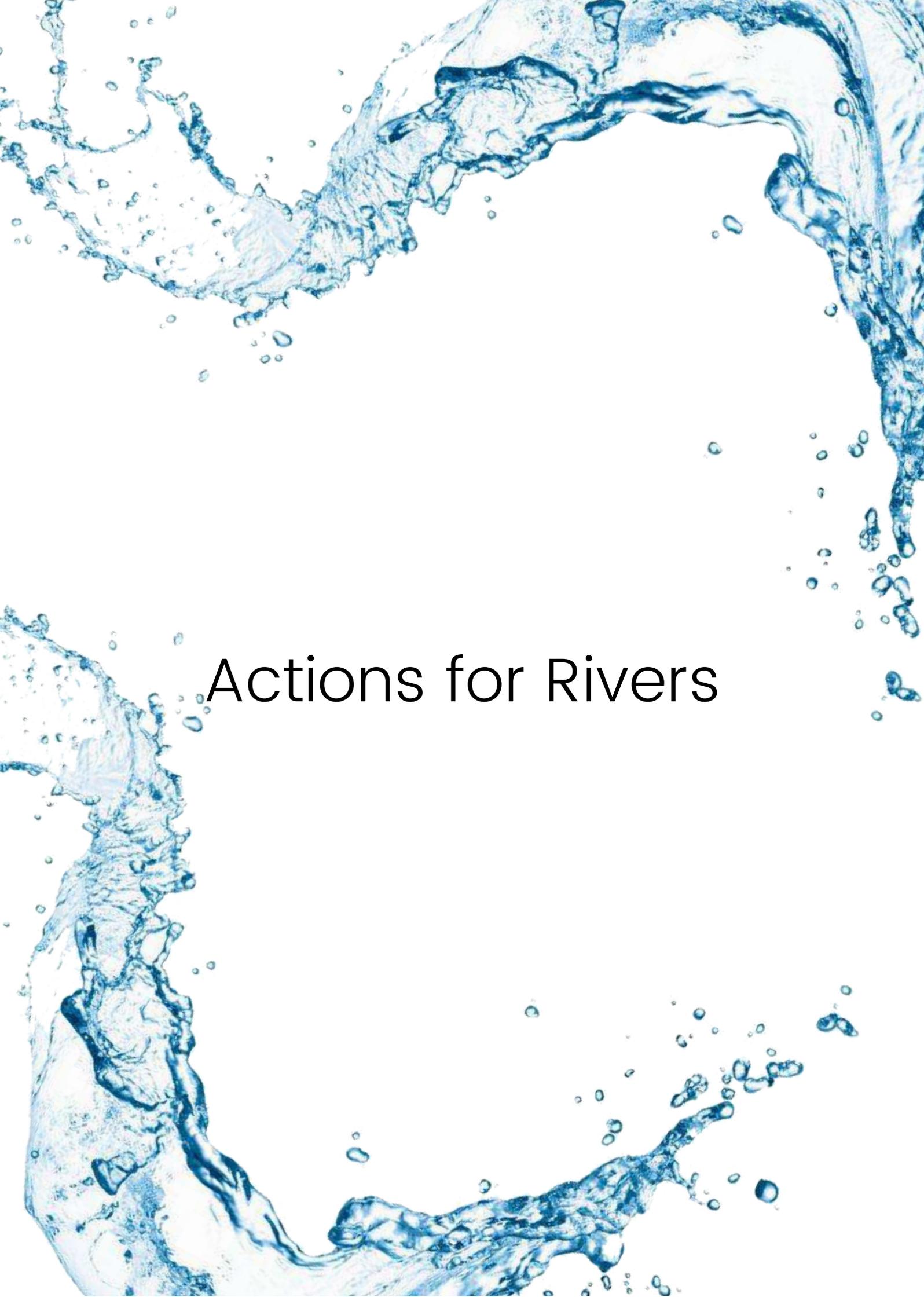
Cork Nature Network's woodland surveys focused on two areas of woodland: Lady Louisa's Walk and the Owenashad River Walk. Lismore's woodlands are an important amenity for the town's residents and visitors, and both have been maintained for safe and easy access. The report notes that the woodlands may contain remnants of historic woodland, and that they are within the Blackwater River Special Area of Conservation. The ecologists report proposes management plans for each area of woodland, including reducing regeneration of non-native species, removing invasive species, planting with native species, and managing dead wood.

These recommendations informed the following actions.



No.	Action	Location	Stakeholders	Year
1	Reduce regeneration of beech and sycamore by removing saplings and seedlings where possible	Owenashad River Walk Lady Louisa's Walkway	Tidy Towns. Men's Shed. Community volunteers	2024 to 2034
2	Thin out some sycamore to open the canopy where possible, particularly felling multi-stemmed trees which are easier to manage. *professional required	Owenashad River Walk Lady Louisa's Walkway	Tidy Towns Waterford City & County Council Lismore Castle Estates Forestry Department	2024 to 2034
3	Remove limbs of dead standing trees where over-hanging branches could block paths or pose a danger to walkers. Where safe – leave trunks standing as dead wood	Owenashad River Walk Lady Louisa's Walkway	Tidy Towns Waterford City & County Council	2024 to 2034
4	Stack and retain all felled wood on site to provide dead wood habitat	Owenashad River Walk Lady Louisa's Walkway	Tidy Towns Council	2024 to 2034
5	Where gaps in the canopy allow, plant with suitable native species – primarily oak with hazel at the understorey (or in shaded areas) also some yew, scots pine, holly, rowan, crab apple, guelder rose, hawthorn, spindle and other native species	Owenashad River Walk Lady Louisa's Walkway	Tidy Towns Council	2024 to 2034
6	Reduce cherry laurel over an extended period, remove small sections at a time and monitor and control re-growth. Eradication unfeasible but reduction may allow shrub layer and future canopy trees to become established.	Owennashad River Walk	Tidy Towns Council National Parks & Wildlife Service	2024 to 2034

No.	Action	Location	Stakeholders	Year
7a	Reduce regeneration of sycamore & conifers with selective removal of saplings as they establish. Some larger trees can be removed if appropriate where dense. Plant gaps in understorey with shade-tolerant species - hazel & holly.	Owennashad River Walk	Tidy Towns Council	2026 to 2034
7b	In gaps in canopy, under-plant with native canopy species – primarily oak with Scots pine, yew, alder, cherry. Gaps along the walkways could be planted with smaller woodland edge species including hazel, rowan, crab apple, spindle, guelder rose, hawthorn.	Owennashad River Walk	Tidy Towns Council	2026 to 2034
8a	Reduce no. of Lawson Cypress to allow natural growth of surrounding trees. Some wood can be made into benches and installed in appropriate locations.	St Carthage's Cathedral	Tidy Towns Cathedral Eco Group	2026 to 2034
8b	Plant native trees where there is space created by the removal of conifers above- 1 or 2 specimen oaks or smaller native trees to provide seasonal variety, colour and interest e.g. rowan, crab apple, spindle, hawthorn, whitebeam etc.	St Carthage's Cathedral	Tidy Towns Cathedral Eco Group	2026 to 2034
13	A no. of native species are regenerating in un-maintained areas, particularly at NE corner - yew, holly, elder and willows -Mark for retaining and leave to develop	St Carthage's Cathedral	Cathedral Eco Group	2024 to 2034

A high-speed photograph of a splash of blue water, captured in a circular, almost ring-like shape. The water is in motion, with many small droplets and bubbles visible, creating a sense of energy and movement. The background is a plain, bright white, which makes the blue water stand out prominently.

# Actions for Rivers

No.	Action	Location	Stakeholders	Year
1	Protect and restore riparian habitats, which are the areas of land adjacent to rivers. This can include planting native vegetation, removing invasive species, and reducing erosion.	Lady Louisa's Walk Canal View Park Owenashad River	Anglers Association Lismore Estates Lismore Tidy Towns Council LAWPRO	2025 to 2034
2	Raise Awareness of waterways pollution from agricultural and urban runoff, including reducing the use of fertilisers and pesticides. Educational leaflets or social media	Social Media Publicity	Lismore Tidy Towns LAWPRO	2025 to 2034
3	Educate about the importance of rivers and their biodiversity, and encourage responsible use of rivers for recreation through signage	Social Media Publicity	Lismore Tidy Towns LAWPRO	2025 to 2034
4	Research the feasibility of developing a river catchment management plan in collaboration with other waterways stakeholders e.g. angling groups and farmers	Research	Local groups LAWPRO	2025 to 2034
5	Planting native trees, shrubs, and other vegetation along the riparian zone can help stabilize the banks, filter pollutants, and provide habitat for wildlife.	River Blackwater Owennashad	Tidy Towns LAWPRO	2025 to 2034

# Actions for Invasive Species

Invasive species refer to non-native plants that establish and spread rapidly in new environments, often out-competing native species and disrupting natural ecosystems. Ireland is no exception to the presence of invasive plant species, which pose significant threats to biodiversity.

One prominent species in Ireland is Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*). This plant grows rapidly and forms dense stands, out-competing native plants and reducing biodiversity. Its deep and extensive root system can cause damage to infrastructure. Another invasive plant is Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*), which grows rapidly and displaces native vegetation, particularly along riverbanks. This can result in soil erosion, increased flood risk, and reduced habitat for native species.

Rhododendron (*Rhododendron ponticum*) is another invasive species that has become widespread. It forms dense thickets, shading out native plants and reducing biodiversity. It also alters soil chemistry, making it difficult for other species to grow.

Giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*) is a highly toxic invasive plant that can cause severe burns and skin reactions in humans. It out-competes native plants and poses a risk to human health.

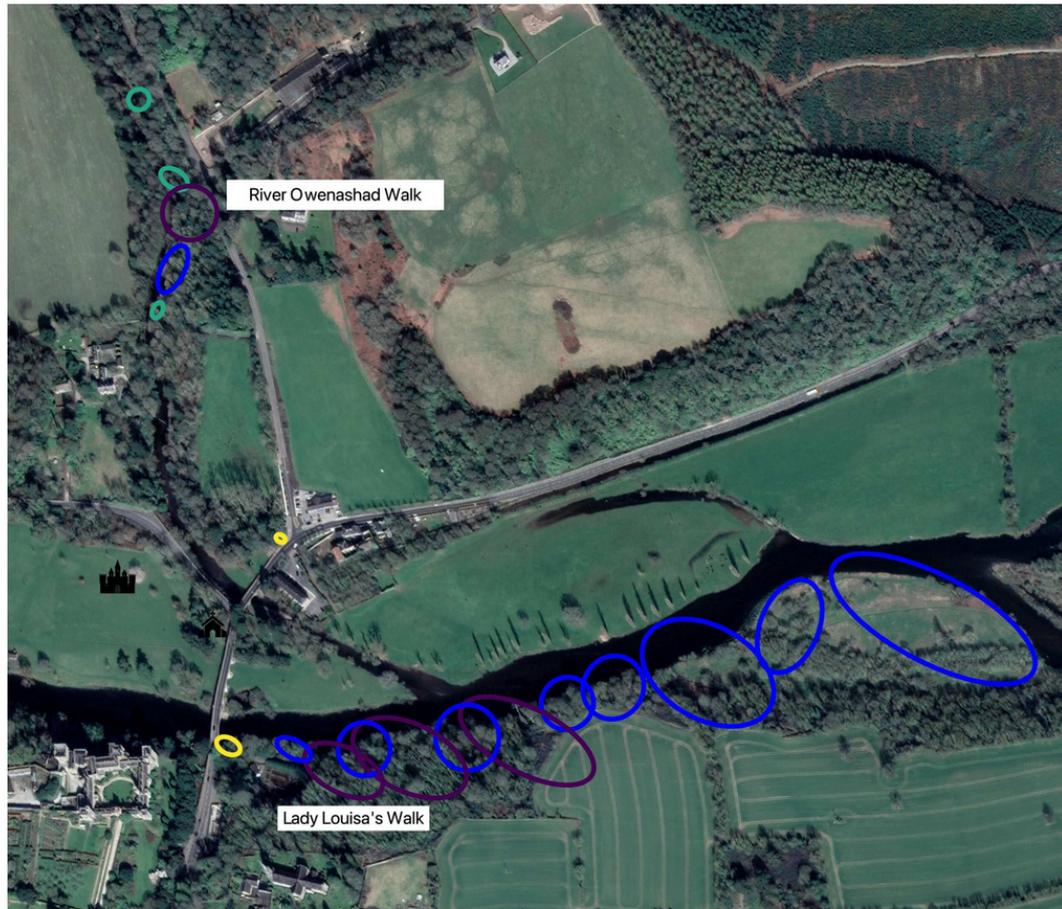
These invasive species and others were identified in Lismore and pose a risk to biodiversity. They out-compete native plants for resources such as sunlight, water, and nutrients, leading to a loss of native plant diversity. As a result, native wildlife that relies on these plants for food and habitat can suffer. Invasive species can also disrupt ecosystem functions, such as nutrient cycling and pollination, which can have cascading effects on other species.

In addition to biodiversity loss, invasive species can impact ecosystem services. For example, the spread of invasive plants along riverbanks can increase the risk of flooding by blocking water flow and destabilizing riverbanks. Invasive species can also reduce the aesthetic and recreational value of natural areas, impacting tourism and local economies.

Efforts to manage and control invasive species take commitment over a long period of time. Actions can include targeted removal and control programs, public education and awareness campaigns, and legislation to prevent the spread of invasive species. Ongoing monitoring and proactive management strategies are necessary to mitigate the threats and risks posed by invasive plant species and protect Lismore's biodiversity.

# Lismore Invasive Species Mapping and Identification Guides

To help facilitate local monitoring and effective management of control measures for invasive species in Lismore, Cork Nature Network Ecologists mapped the locations of invasive species in the town and environs.



## Lismore Invasive Species

### Invasive Species

- Cherry Laurel
- Himalayan Balsam
- Japanese Knotweed
- Rhododendron
- Winter Heliotrope

This map was created for the Lismore Biodiversity Action Plan 2023. Areas of invasive species recorded are indicative only, and do not accurately depict the full extent of the species distribution.

0 0,2 0,4 0,6 0,8 km



Sources: Google Satellite, Cork Nature Network Surveys



June 2023

Cherry Laurel *Prunus laurocerasus*

<https://species.biodiversityireland.ie/profile.php?taxonId=28940>

Giant hogweed *Heracleum mantegazzianum*

<https://invasives.ie/app/uploads/2022/01/Giant-Hogweed.pdf>

Himalayan Balsam *Impatiens glandulifera*

[https://invasives.ie/app/uploads/2022/01/Himalayan-Balsam\\_PRINT.pdf](https://invasives.ie/app/uploads/2022/01/Himalayan-Balsam_PRINT.pdf)

Himalayan Knotweed *Persicaria wallichii*

<https://invasives.ie/app/uploads/2022/01/Himalayan-knotweed.pdf>

Japanese Knotweed *Fallopia Japonica*

<https://invasives.ie/app/uploads/2022/01/Japanese-Knotweedv1.1.pdf>

Rhododendron *Rhododendron ponticum*

[https://invasives.ie/app/uploads/2022/01/ID\\_Rhododendron\\_ponticum\\_GBNNSS-ID-Sheet.pdf](https://invasives.ie/app/uploads/2022/01/ID_Rhododendron_ponticum_GBNNSS-ID-Sheet.pdf)

Winter Heliotrope *Petasites fragrans*

<https://species.biodiversityireland.ie/profile.php?taxonId=43895>

No	Action	Location	Stakeholders	Year
1	Update the Lismore invasive species map with regular monitoring in Spring and Early summer each year	Lady Louisa's Walk Owennashad River	Lismore Tidy Towns	2024 to 2034
2	Winter Heliotrope, ( <i>Petasites fragrans</i> ) Controlled spraying of Roundup Bioactive may be used to suppress growth and control the further spread.	Owennashad River Walk by picnic areas. Entrance to Lady Louisa's Walk	Tidy Towns Council Lismore Estates	2024 to 2034
3	Japanese Knot weed, ( <i>Fallopia Japonica</i> ), observed at two separate locations along the river bank. Contact county council for assistance with removal. Under no circumstances should an unqualified person remove these.	Owenashad River Other locations in Lismore & Environs	Report to Waterford City & County Council	On-going
4	Himalayan Balsam, <i>Impatiens glandulifera</i> , observation and active removal over the growing season to prevent further spread. Balsam bashing parties between May and June - before the plants flower and set seed.	Owenashad River Wet grassland area of Lady Louisa's Walk	Tidy Towns Community Volunteers	2024 to 2034
5	Montbretia, <i>Crocasmia x crocosmifolia</i> - small population could spread and infiltrate natural forest. Manual removal - complete eradication can take a number of years - in Summer before flowering	Owenashad River Walk	Tidy Towns Community Volunteers	2024 to 2034
6	Spanish bluebells - remove by hand to avoid further hybridisation with native species. Continue observation/monitoring	Owennashad River Walk	Tidy Towns Community Volunteers	2024 to 2034

# Wildlife Corridors

## The importance of connectivity

Ireland's landscape is a patchwork of natural areas, agricultural parcels, and urbanised zones, which can isolate wildlife populations. Wildlife corridors facilitate the movement of species between fragmented habitats, they are connections across the landscape that link up areas of habitat. They support natural processes that occur in a healthy environment, like the movement of species to find resources, such as food and water. They can promote native flora and fauna, contributing to ecosystem resilience and helping species adapt to changing environmental conditions - especially important in the face of climate change.

Wildlife corridors benefit various taxa from insects, to birds, and bats and more. Insects, especially pollinators like bees and butterflies, rely on a variety of flowering plants for food. Wildlife corridors provide a continuous network of these plants, ensuring a constant supply of nectar and pollen, while also providing shelter. Birds need stopover points for rest and refueling. Wildlife corridors, rich in diverse vegetation and insects, offer these crucial habitats and are important nesting sites. Bats, essential for insect control and ecosystem balance, utilise wildlife corridors as commuting routes between foraging and roosting areas. Plants as well as mammals can colonise, migrate, and interbreed successfully with the help of wildlife corridors. With the aim of illustrating how some of our favourite and best known species move around Lismore and to demonstrate the value of connectivity to biodiversity, an educational leaflet on **Lismore Wildlife Corridor** was created by Cork Nature Network which is available by request to Lismore Tidy Towns.



# Resources

- [Conserving our Natural Heritage County Waterford Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2008 - 2013](#)
- [A Guide for Community Groups working with Water, Biodiversity and Climate](#)
- [Tidy Towns Green Spaces and Landscaping](#)
- [NPWS Protected Areas Site Synopsis : Blackwater River \(Cork/Waterford\) SAC Site Code: 002170](#)
- [Waterford City & County Development Plan 2022 – 2028](#)
- [National Survey of Native Woodlands 2003-2008 - Datasets](#)

## Ecological Reports

The following ecological reports produced by Cork Nature Network are available by request from Lismore Tidy Towns email to [lismoretidytowns@gmail.com](mailto:lismoretidytowns@gmail.com)

- Geological Research
- Botanical Survey
- Bird Survey
- Riparian & Invertebrate Survey
- Woodland Tree Survey

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