



News Update Sent by Email to the LCCA mailing list on 6 March 2021

Dear Friends of Lough Carra,

We hope that you and your families are all keeping well. Please find below news update from the Lough Carra Catchment Association.

### **EU Life Project**

As mentioned in the last email update, the Lough Carra EU LIFE Full Application was submitted before the deadline and we are now awaiting news on the outcome. In the meantime, please find below a document prepared for the LCCA Farmer Liaison group which gives an outline of the proposed project.

### **Boating on Lough Carra**

Philip Doddy has produced a video to accompany his waltz 'Boating on Lough Carra'. You can find it through the Lough Carra website at this link

<http://loughcarra.org/literature-music-the-arts/music/>

### **Pink Footed Goose**

The NPWS Ranger, Jamie Durrant, recently identified a Pink-footed Goose on the shores of Lough Carra. It was amongst a group of Whooper Swans and Greylag Geese in the Castle Carra area. This goose is a rare visitor to Ireland and the only known record for Lough Carra. There are photos on the Lough Carra Facebook

page <https://www.facebook.com/loughcarra.org/>

### **News from Joyce Country and Western Lakes (JCWL) Geopark Project**

An on-line conference will be held on 15 and 16 June 2021 with four sessions of talks. In addition to the talks there will be an on-line exhibition and some live workshops.

You can keep up to date with what's happening in the JCWL Geopark Project through our social media links @JCWLGeopark (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) and

website [www.joycecountrygeoparkproject.ie](http://www.joycecountrygeoparkproject.ie)

### **Mayo County Development Plan 2021 to 2027 submissions**

The draft Mayo County Development Plan 2021 to 2027 is open for submissions from the public until 4pm on 16 March 2021. The plan covers all aspects of life in Mayo from Housing, Tourism, Recreation to Natural Environment and Climate Change. You can make your submission in writing or on-line. The web link for access to all the relevant documents and to make a submission is <https://consult.mayo.ie>

### **General Items of Interest**

A couple of general items that are of relevance to the general well being of our environment throughout Ireland and thus the Lough Carra Catchment

1) High Nature Value, practised in the Burren [www.hnvlink.eu](http://www.hnvlink.eu).

2) 'Garden Plans for Pollinators' by Caher Bridge Garden for Burren in Bloom 2019  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?fbclid=IwAR1fP9ny-i2TaLrCOF84YC76MkYzvJ8phCo9HUUJ5TUyh1VT3WiCnVh9T9w&v=F29ZXAgzAQk&feature=youtu.be>

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You can find copies of all previous news update emails and meeting minutes on the Lough Carra website [www.loughcarra.org](http://www.loughcarra.org) under the tab 'Catchment Association'.

If you no longer wish to receive emails and/or texts from the Lough Carra Catchment Association please let us know by return email.

Best regards  
Lynda Huxley  
Secretary  
LCCA

## An outline of the proposed Lough Carra LIFE project

Lough Carra is important to many people, especially those who live around its shores, in its catchment, and who drink its water. It is also important to the region, for recreation, farming, angling, and tourism. Ecologically, it is a rare and special place, and is considered one of Europe's premier marl lakes. The ecosystems, biodiversity and landscape of Lough Carra can be found in very few other places in Europe or around the world. Biologists who come here from other countries to study Lough Carra are amazed and fascinated by the ecological richness of this lake that we have right on our doorstep.



The proposed LIFE project is intended to address some of the problems that have been building up in Lough Carra in recent decades, and to help local people, especially farmers, to benefit from measures that can be taken to protect and restore the lake. The LIFE project, if successful, would be a multi-million-euro project, funded partly by the EU and partly by local and national organisations, such as the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Mayo County Council, the National Parks & Wildlife Service, and others.

### **What is the problem with Lough Carra?**

The main problem is nutrient pollution, by which chemicals such as phosphorus and nitrogen end up in the lake, degrading and destroying the lake's natural habitats and species. Other issues to be addressed by the project are the loss of semi-natural habitats such as native woodlands, species-rich grassland and hedgerows, declines in species such as trout, and the problems caused by invasive species.

### **What are the effects of nutrient pollution?**

Lough Carra was originally very low in nutrients, and its natural habitats and species are adapted to living in these low-nutrient conditions. However, in recent decades, the amount of nutrients entering the lake has increased enormously, and this is having major effects on the lake:

- The marl lakebed, originally white, has darkened and turned green in parts of the lake, due to green algal slime growing over it.
- Bulrushes and reeds have become more dense, and have spread into parts of the lake which were previously clear, making boating difficult in these areas.
- Algal blooms have become a problem, and scums of green algae have started washing up on the lakeshore (see photo on following page).
- Trout in Lough Carra have declined by 75% over the last twenty years. There has also been a major drop in mayfly numbers.