



Building a river revetment at Culdaff

Small actions, big results

Micheala Gallagher joins the Trust team

An environmental network for the NW?

Farming for Water

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BUILDING A REVETMENT

The Inishowen Rivers Trust and Loughs Agency recently installed a natural revetment on the Culdaff River using bundles of local brash to protect the bank and support wildlife. For more details check out page 2.

GREEN GUARDIANS

Our Green Guardians series brought people together to learn about soil health, pollinators, birds, and local wildlife. Through hands-on workshops and expert talks, participants discovered simple ways to protect nature and keep Inishowen's rivers and landscapes thriving.

SMALL ACTIONS, BIG RESULTS

Deleting unwanted emails does more than clear your inbox – it helps reduce the internet's energy and water use. This simple action lowers the demand on data servers and supports the conservation of our planet's vital water resources.

WELCOME TO THE TEAM

We are delighted to welcome Micheala Gallagher to the Trust's core staff team. A native of Letterkenny, Micheala has enthusiastically taken on our work with schools, attending events and teaming up with other groups.

What it takes to create a river revetment



Rivers are living systems that naturally shift and change, but this movement can sometimes cause erosion, washing away soil and damaging habitats. To manage this naturally, we build river revetments, protective structures made from bundles of branches, or brush, instead of concrete or stone.

These bundles are fixed securely along the riverbank to slow the flow of water and encourage sediment to build up.

Over the last year our volunteers have gathered brush around the peninsula from local woodlands, binding it into bundles that can be used in the river. On 27th September this brush was brought to the river



ready for installment that day. Inishowen Rivers Trust staff, volunteers, and experts from the Loughs Agency worked together to install the brush bundles, securing them firmly with posts and wire so they can withstand the river's current.

The result is more than just a barrier against erosion, it is a boost for local biodiversity. Already, the structure is providing valuable shelter for insects, fish, and birds, helping to strengthen the river's natural food web. In the months ahead vegetation will knit through the brush, blending the structure seamlessly into the landscape.

A big thank you to everyone who contributed in any way - to the Loughs Agency staff, to Uisce Eireann for their support and to all our amazing volunteers!

Small Actions, Big Results

Clear Your Inbox, Save Water

When we think about saving water, the last place we usually look is our email inbox. But every email stored online is kept on a data server and those servers need huge amounts of electricity to run and cool. Producing that electricity often uses vast quantities of water.

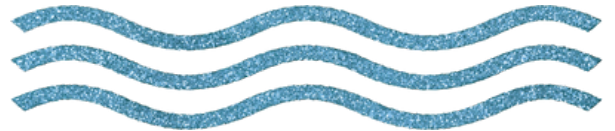
In fact, the simple act of storing millions of unnecessary emails adds to the demand on power plants, which in turn draw heavily on water supplies for cooling and energy production. The more digital clutter we hold on to, the more hidden water we waste.

By regularly deleting unwanted messages, you're not just tidying up your inbox, you're helping to reduce the energy and water footprint of the internet. It's a small but meaningful step towards conserving one of our most precious resources.



Call to Action

Take five minutes once a week to delete 50 old emails. It's quick, it's easy, and it makes a difference, for you, for our rivers, and for the planet.



INISHOWEN RIVERS TRUST DONORS

Thank You



As a charity, we rely entirely on funding and donations. This year, we are grateful to Inish Pharmacy for their continued generosity in choosing Inishowen Rivers Trust as their chosen charity partner. These funds are invaluable, enabling us to invest in education and organise events.



Welcome to the team

Micheala Gallagher



We're delighted to welcome Micheala Gallagher to the Inishowen Rivers Trust team.

Micheala, who has lived in Letterkenny for most of her life, brings with her an impressive academic background and a real passion for conservation. She holds a BSc in Science (Zoology) from the University of Galway and has recently completed a Masters in Conservation Behaviour at ATU Galway.

Alongside her studies, Micheala has been an active volunteer with several organisations, including the Inishowen Rivers Trust, where she gained valuable hands-on experience in the field.

Micheala has already been actively involved in the Shared Island event, our Green Guardians, leading on our school workshops with the Mill River Conservation Group and increasing her knowledge and skills at the Culdaff revetment and training with FH Wetlands.

Her commitment to protecting and preserving nature shines through in everything she does, and we are excited to see her apply both her academic expertise and practical skills to our ongoing projects. Please join us in giving Micheala a warm welcome as she begins this next chapter with the Trust!

An Environmental Network for the North West?

The Trust were delighted to help facilitate the Citizen Assembly in the IOSAS Centre in Muff on 20th September. This event was the culmination of the Shared Island Initiative delivered by cross border partners IDP and RAPID Derry. Communities gathered from across the NW to discuss the idea of creating a network of groups to support biodiversity. The final report will be available on our website soon.



Farming for Water: The Measures That Make a Difference

Across Inishowen, farmers are taking positive steps to protect water quality while keeping their farms productive and resilient. “Farming for Water” is not about big, expensive changes, it’s about small, practical measures that, when added together, make a huge difference across a catchment.

When heavy rain falls, soil, nutrients and slurry can easily be washed from fields into nearby drains and rivers. Simple actions on the farm can help slow this process down, keeping valuable nutrients on the land and preventing pollution downstream. These are the core ideas behind Farming for Water, farming smarter, not harder.

One of the most effective measures is protecting watercourses. Leaving a strip of grass or native vegetation along the edges of rivers and drains acts like a natural filter. These “buffer zones” trap soil and nutrients before they reach the water, while providing valuable habitat for birds, bees and insects. In some places, farmers are planting trees or fencing off banks to prevent erosion and give riverbanks time to recover.



Improving soil health is another key part of the picture. Healthy, well-structured soils soak up more rain, hold nutrients better, and reduce runoff. By testing soils regularly, managing slurry carefully, and maintaining good grass cover, farmers can make sure nutrients are used efficiently and stay where they’re needed.



Farmyards and tracks can also play a role. Managing clean and dirty water separately, keeping feeding areas tidy, and diverting rainwater away from slurry storage all help prevent pollution risks during wet weather.

And beyond these practical steps, many farmers are going further, planting hedgerows, creating small wetlands, or allowing parts of their land to act as natural sponges that hold back floodwater. These measures support biodiversity and make farms more resilient to climate extremes.

Each small change may seem minor, but collectively they protect the very foundation of farming, clean water, fertile soil, and a thriving natural environment. By farming for water, Inishowen’s farmers are helping to secure the future of both their land and their local rivers.

A Summer by the River: Riverside Reflections and Green Guardians

This summer, the Inishowen Rivers Trust brought people together across the peninsula to celebrate and care for our rivers through creativity, learning, and community.



Our '*Riverside Reflections*' events in Moville and Clonmany in August 2025 explored the stories, songs, and heritage of local rivers through art, music, and storytelling, beautifully captured in the *Riverside Reflections* Podcast, now available on our website.



Meanwhile, our Green Guardians Biodiversity Training continued to inspire local action for nature, giving participants hands-on experience with soil health, water quality, and biodiversity.



From song and story to soil and science, each event reminded us that healthy rivers depend on connected communities. A huge thank you to everyone who took part, and to our partners and funders for their support.



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Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media

World Migratory Bird Day

11th October 2025

Bird migration is the seasonal movement of certain birds that travel long distances to find better food, weather, and suitable places to breed. This journey happens every year, often across thousands of miles.



In Ireland, many different species of river and wetland birds migrate annually. During the summer months, birds such as the Sand Martin arrive to breed, making burrows in riverbanks before flying back to Africa for the winter. In contrast, the winter brings species like the Brent Goose and the Whooper Swan, which arrive seeking milder conditions and better food availability. The Brent Geese depart for the Arctic, while the Whooper Swans fly back to Iceland and other Arctic regions for the summer months.

Bird migration is an important natural indicator of environmental change. Shifts in migration patterns such as earlier arrivals or delayed departures can signal issues like climate change, habitat loss, or changes in food availability. By studying these patterns, we can gain insights into the health of ecosystems.



Rivers play a crucial role in bird migration. Many species rely on river ecosystems as stopover sites during their journeys. Rivers and lakes provide essential resources such as food, fresh water, shelter, and safe places to rest, helping birds avoid predators and human disturbances. Some species also use riverbanks and surrounding wetlands as breeding grounds. Additionally, rivers serve as important natural landmarks that can help birds navigate during their migration.

Many species follow river corridors as clear flyways across the landscape, making it easier for them to find their way.



A Word from Our Chair



"Pic courtesy Seán Ó Mainnín/Tuairisc.ie"

It was all so very sudden in the end and his death leaves a great gaping hole. The following morning, the enormity of that gap became very apparent as news outlets and social media were full of Manchán. It was so moving to see the very apparent impact he had had.

I had known him for a mere 18 months but how much more enriched my life was because of this brief time. I first met him down in the Liberties of course and spent a wonderful evening talking all things nature restoration and regenerative farming.

About a month later, I was delighted to learn that Manchán had become the first ambassador for the All-Ireland Rivers Trust and I couldn't think of a more wonderful choice. He played a uniquely resonant role bringing together folklore, language, nature connection and environmental advocacy. He recognised that as well as being physical bodies of water, rivers tied together people and place, myth and memory. They are cultural arteries as well as spiritual beings.

He spoke about how in myth and language our ancestors regarded rivers almost as deities: "Rivers are the lifeblood of our world. It is no wonder that our forebears regarded so many of them as goddesses. ... They are the magical beings that animate the earth ... ensuring its vibrancy and fertility."

Manchán Magan was primarily a writer and a storyteller whose books, such as *Thirty-Two Words for a Field* and *Listen to the Land Speak* invite readers to rediscover the deep ecological wisdom within Irish language and heritage. Manchán's voice urged us to remember that rivers, fields and words themselves are sacred — vessels of memory and meaning that sustain both landscape and soul. Travel on well my friend, you are loved and missed by many.

On 2nd October, I had just finished my dinner when I got word through from a friend. The saddest of sad news. Dear Manchán had passed.

Now, we knew it was coming undoubtedly, the knowledge of his illness was public but we hoped fervently we would have longer than we did.

