



HOWTH

SPECIAL AMENITY AREA

PROTECT CONSERVE ENJOY

**April - September 2025
Events Programme**

Comhairle Contae
Fhine Gall
Fingal County
Council



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| 12 | Community Information Night with Howth SAAO | FREE |

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Howth SAAO events programme for April - September 2025.

We have a wide range of events, walks and talks on offer throughout Howth.

A large part of Howth is designated as a Special Amenity Area Order (SAAO) because of its outstanding beauty, special recreational value and nature conservation interests. It covers a total of 547 hectares, including Ireland's Eye. The area is rich in biodiversity, including protected plant and animal species, large colonies of seabirds, and valuable habitats ranging from Atlantic dry heathland to wetlands, and woodland. The area is also steeped in history and has numerous archaeological sites and monuments (e.g., Aideen's Grave, Howth Castle, St Mary's Abbey, and Martello Tower), and rich maritime heritage. There are four looped pathways that allow visitors to enjoy the wildlife, history and stunning scenery of Howth.

The SAAO committee works to protect and enhance the SAAO area. The Howth SAAO Committee consists of local community & interest groups, local councillors and the NPWS. This year the Howth SAAO committee launched a new 'Respect and Enjoy Howth' campaign. The initiative aims to encourage all those who visit Howth to appreciate its unique landscape and help to protect it. To celebrate this campaign, the SAAO committee is running an events programme on Howth from April to September 2025. Please see details throughout this programme and enjoy as much as you can!

We look forward to seeing you at one of our outings! If you have any suggestions and ideas for walks, talks or events, please get in contact with us on howthsaao@gmail.com.



| EVENT TIMETABLE | | | |
|--|-------------------|---|--|
| EVENT | DATE | LOCATION | TIME |
| APRIL | | | |
| EU Nature Restoration Regulations | 2 nd | Howth Yacht Club | 8:00pm - 9:30pm |
| Bug Safari | 26 th | Howth | SLOTS 11:30am & 2:30pm |
| MAY | | | |
| Whale Watch Ireland 2025 | 17 th | Howth Head | 5:00pm - 7:00pm |
| JUNE | | | |
| Kidding Around With Katie | 12 th | Howth | SLOTS 11:30am & 2:00pm |
| Pond Dipping In The Bog of Frogs | 14 th | Bog of Frogs Loop, Howth | SLOTS 10:00am, 11:30am, 1:00pm & 2:30pm |
| Beginners' Sea Snorkelling | 19 th | Balscadden Beach, Howth | 7:00pm - 9:00pm |
| Ireland's Eye Nesting Sea Birds | 29 th | Howth West Pier | 1:30pm |
| JULY | | | |
| Garden Pond Workshop | 5 th | Howth Howth Court House & Bog of Frogs | 11:30am - 2:00pm |
| Howth Butterfly Walk | 26 th | Baily Lighthouse | 10:30am - 12:00pm |
| AUGUST | | | |
| Dublin Bay Biosphere Tour from Howth | 20 th | West Pier, Howth | 2:00pm - 4:00pm |
| Reptile Ramble | 23 rd | Red Rock, Howth | SLOTS 10:00am, 11:30am, 1:00pm & 2:30pm |
| SEPTEMBER | | | |
| Howth Maritime & Seafood Festival 2025 | 6-7 th | Howth Marina | 11:00am - 4:00pm |
| Flora Cliff Walk | 13 th | Howth | 10:30am - 12:30pm |
| Community Information Night | 17 th | Howth Yacht Club | 7:30pm - 9:00pm |

2
APRIL

EU NATURE RESTORATION REGULATIONS with
HOWTH & SUTTON HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY &
REBECCA JEFFREY

8:00pm - 9:30pm at Howth Yacht Club, Howth, Co. Dublin



An Illustrated talk by Rebecca Jeffrey on *EU Nature Restoration Regulations And What It Means For Us*, hosted by the Howth & Sutton Horticultural Society. No booking necessary.

26
APRIL

BUG SAFARI with NESSA DARCY (Creative Entomologist)
11:30am & 2:30pm in Howth, Co. Dublin



Meet the insects that frequent Howth's heathlands! Adult session in the morning comparing beetle composition between areas recently burnt and those unaffected by fire in the last few years. Family friendly session in the afternoon demonstrating various trapping techniques.

- SLOT 1 11:30am
- SLOT 2 2:30pm

Meet at the Shearwater Bus Stop 700, Carrickbrack Road, Howth, Co. Dublin. **BOOKING REQUIRED:** Register at <https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/insect-safari-at-red-rock-with-a-focus-on-beetles-tickets-1317832375109?aff=oddtcreator/>.

**17
MAY****WHALE WATCH IRELAND 2025 with IRISH WHALE
AND DOLPHIN GROUP***5:00pm - 7:00pm at Howth Head*

Conal O'Flanagan, from the Irish Whale & Dolphin Group, will host an evenings Whale Watching in Howth. Bring binoculars! This annual event, now in its 23rd year, comprises free and guided whale watches at local headlands and vantage points, as part of All-Ireland whale watch day. These simultaneous land-based watches at 11 sites around the Irish coast provide IWDG researchers, whale enthusiasts and Citizen Scientists alike with a unique overview of whale and dolphin activity on the day and you can play an important part. While there are no guarantees of sightings, given reasonable weather you have a good chance of seeing some of the marine species that can be viewed locally.

This event is suitable for all ages and is aimed at everyone from the novice wildlife enthusiast to the experienced naturalist. We advise participants to dress appropriately for the weather conditions on the day. There may be a short, elevated walk from the meeting point to your watch site, so sensible footwear is recommended, and your local watch may not be wheelchair accessible. You should bring binoculars, your sense of humour and refreshments, but please leave your pets at home.

**WHALE
WATCH**
Ireland 2025

The group will meet at Balscadden car park. This event is free and no registration is required. In the event of unsuitable weather your watch leader may need to cancel your local event at short notice; so, if any doubt, please check in with them using the contact details below or on www.iwdg.ie/events.

Contact Ronan Hickey at ronan.hici@gmail.com or 086 339 1142 for more information.

12
JUNE

KIDDING AROUND WITH KATIE with KATIE ABEL

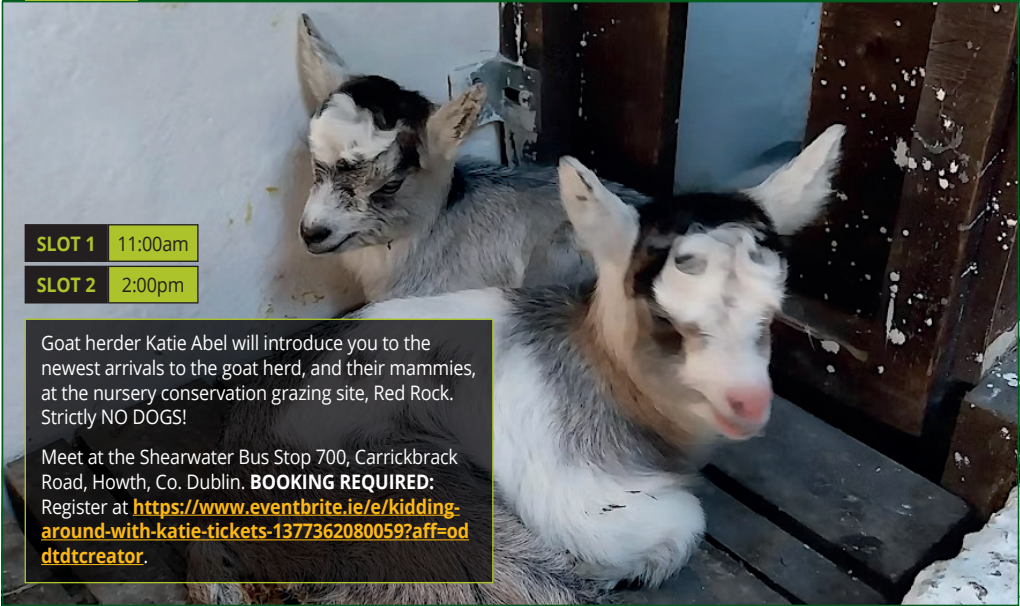
11:00am & 2:00pm in Howth, Co. Dublin

SLOT 1 11:00am

SLOT 2 2:00pm

Goat herder Katie Abel will introduce you to the newest arrivals to the goat herd, and their mummies, at the nursery conservation grazing site, Red Rock. Strictly NO DOGS!

Meet at the Shearwater Bus Stop 700, Carrickbrack Road, Howth, Co. Dublin. **BOOKING REQUIRED:** Register at <https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/kidding-around-with-katie-tickets-1377362080059?aff=oddtcreator>.



14
JUNE

POND DIPPING IN THE BOG OF FROGS with ROB GANDOLA (Herpetological Society of Ireland)

10:00am - 4:00pm in Bog of Frogs Loop, Howth

Rob Gandola from the Herpetological Society of Ireland will lead family friendly pond dipping sessions in the rewetted Bog of Frogs. A chance to look below the surface at the secret life of ponds. Most people are completely unaware of the many insects and amphibians that feed, breed and live in these environments. Join Rob Gandola on a guided walk to see and learn about what lurks in our freshwater ponds. Please wear appropriate footwear and leave the pets at home.

SLOT 1 10:00am

SLOT 2 11:30am

SLOT 3 1:00pm

SLOT 4 2:30pm



Meet at Bin Eadar GAA Club. This is a free event. **BOOKING REQUIRED:** Please register online at <https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/pond-dipping-in-bog-of-frogs-howth-tickets-1377418087579?> This event will be run in multiple one-hour sessions. Please arrive only for the session you have booked.

**19
JUNE****BEGINNERS' SEA SNORKELLING with PORTMARNOCK
SUB-AQUA CLUB***7:00pm - 9:00pm at Balcadden Beach, Howth*

Curious about sub-aquatic sports, but not sure where to begin? This event presents an opportunity to try snorkelling in an actual outdoors environment, with the safety and guidance provided by an instructor. See below the waves and experience greater freedom to move and explore than regular sea swimming. Following basic instruction in breathing, diving and swimming techniques, go below and take a closer look at the local sea life: seaweed, fish, crabs and maybe even seals. Suitable for complete beginners with no experience. Must be comfortable in the water, able to swim and over 18. Masks, snorkels and swim fins provided; participants must bring their own swimsuit or wetsuit. **BOOKING REQUIRED:** Please register online at <https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/beginners-sea-snorkel-with-portmarnock-sub-aqua-club-tickets-1363516999049?aff=oddttdtcreator>.

29
JUNE**IRELAND'S EYE NESTING SEA BIRDS with HOWTH
CLIFF CRUISES & BWI***1:30pm at Howth West Pier*

Captain Mark Doyle, Howth Cliff Cruises, will take you on a 45 minute boat tour around Ireland's Eye to see the nesting sea bird colonies guided by BWI/FCC biodiversity team. Please arrive 15 mins before sailing. Sailing at 1:30pm.

BOOKING REQUIRED: Please register at <https://howthcliffcruises.ie/cruises/irelands-eye-and-howth-coast-tour/>. The promo code to enter at the checkout for the 50% off is **SAAOFINGAL2025**.



**5
JULY****GARDEN POND WORKSHOP** with **ROB GANDOLA**
(Herpetological Society of Ireland)*11:00am - 4:00pm in Howth Howth Court House & Bog of Frogs*

Rob Gandola from the Herpetological Society of Ireland will present a workshop on Garden Ponds - how to care for or create them, in the Howth Court House followed by a practical session at the Bog of Frogs for those who wish to join the field trip. Please wear appropriate footwear and leave the pets at home. All welcome, just come along!

**26
JULY****HOWTH BUTTERFLY WALK** with **JESMOND HARDING**
(Butterfly Conservation Ireland)*10:30am - 12:00pm at Summit Car Park & Baily Lighthouse*

Author Jesmond Harding, Butterfly Conservation Ireland, will lead a guided butterfly walk focusing on Howth's rare species and their habitat preferences. Butterflies and moths make up about 9-10% of all life found on the planet. Learn how butterflies develop, why butterflies matter, how to identify Ireland's butterflies, the habitats they need and how you can attract butterflies to your garden. Howth has some good habitats for butterflies and weather and season permitting, we should be able to find and identify the area's butterflies. The event is suitable for people of all ages. The walk is mainly through grassland and does not involve strenuous activity. **BOOKING REQUIRED:** Please register online at <https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/howth-butterfly-walk-tickets-1363103582509?aff=oddtcreator>.



**20
AUG.****DUBLIN BAY BIOSPHERE TOUR FROM HOWTH with
DUBLIN BAY CRUISES***2:00pm - 4:00pm at West Pier, Howth, Co. Dublin*

Dublin Bay is internationally recognised for its fascinating natural and cultural heritage and has recently been designated as a UNESCO Biosphere. Join us on this special Biosphere Cruise from Howth - see the incredible bird colonies of Ireland's Eye and the majestic Howth Cliffs before rounding the Baily Lighthouse to view and learn about the nature and ecology of the Dublin Biosphere.



The tour boat will berth at the end of the West Pier in Howth, with passengers embarking and disembarking in front of Aqua Restaurant. There is a full heated indoor cabin that you can enjoy if it rains but we do recommend bringing a waterproof jacket also. The boat is currently not wheelchair accessible. Contact biodiversity@fingal.ie if you wish to discuss accessibility concerns related to this event. There will be a bar/snack bar on board serving tea, coffee and soft drinks as well as beer, wine, cider and prosecco should you wish to purchase refreshments during the cruise. **BOOKING REQUIRED:** €12.50 per person. Book online at <https://dublinbaycruises.rezgo.com/details/391635/dublin-bay-biosphere-tour-from-howth>.

23
AUG.

REPTILE RAMBLE with **ROB GANDOLA** (Herpetological Society of Ireland)

11:00am - 4:00pm in Red Rock, Howth, Co. Dublin

Rob Gandola from the Herpetological Society of Ireland will lead family friendly reptile ramble around Red Rock. This event will be weather dependent and will be rescheduled for the following day or week depending on the forecast. Strictly NO DOGS!

SLOT 1 10:00am

SLOT 2 11:30am

SLOT 3 1:00pm

SLOT 4 2:30pm



BOOKING REQUIRED: Please register online at <https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/reptile-ramble-in-red-rock-howth-tickets-1377456402179?>. This event will be run in multiple one-hour sessions. Please arrive only for the session you have booked.

**6-7
SEPT.****HOWTH MARITIME & SEAFOOD FESTIVAL 2025** with
FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL*11:00am - 4:00pm in Howth Marina*

Dive into Howth in 2025!

Get ready for a splash of excitement as the **Howth Maritime & Seafood Festival** sails into the picturesque fishing village of Howth in the summer of 2025.



The Howth Maritime & Seafood Festival sails into the picturesque fishing village of Howth in the summer of 2025. This is your invitation to a fantastic weekend filled with everything you love - from seafood to free family fun and toe-tapping live music - all while supporting our beloved local businesses. The Biodiversity Unit will be there to share the wilder side of Howth with you through games, interesting facts and show-and-tell with actual, living residents of Howth's marine and freshwater habitats.

Join us as we come together to celebrate the essence of Howth - its rich maritime history, the flavours of the sea, and the warmth of its community. Don't miss out on this extraordinary seaside celebration! This Event is run by the Events Unit in Fingal County Council.



13
SEPT.

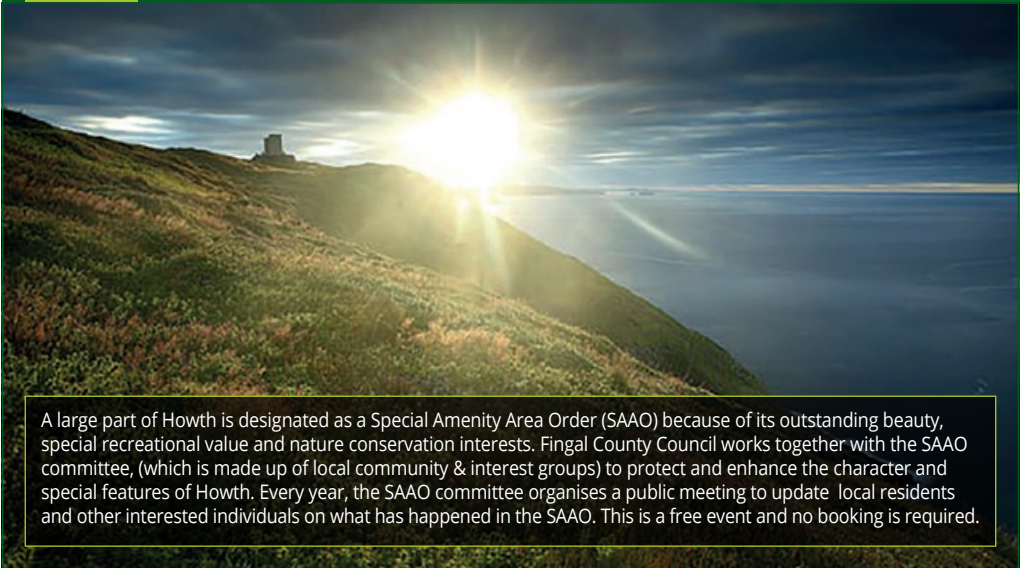
FLORA CLIFF WALK with **DECLAN DOOGUE** (Botanist)
10:30am - 12:30pm in Howth, Co. Dublin

Renowned botanist Declan Doogue will host a flora walk along the cliff path describing the plant communities of Howth's unique habitats and the threats to them. Meet at 10.30 at the Balscadden car park (<https://maps.app.goo.gl/qkzmd96jegDCGczJ6>). No booking required, just come along!



17
SEPT.

COMMUNITY INFORMATION NIGHT with
HOWTH SAAO
7:30pm - 9:00pm at Howth Yacht Club



A large part of Howth is designated as a Special Amenity Area Order (SAAO) because of its outstanding beauty, special recreational value and nature conservation interests. Fingal County Council works together with the SAAO committee, (which is made up of local community & interest groups) to protect and enhance the character and special features of Howth. Every year, the SAAO committee organises a public meeting to update local residents and other interested individuals on what has happened in the SAAO. This is a free event and no booking is required.

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<https://www.instagram.com/howthsaaao/>



<https://x.com/HowthSaaao3423>



<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61574067010184>

Or visit:

www.fingal.ie/howth-special-amenity-area-order

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