

**BirdWatch Mayo Branch Meeting
19th January 2022 : 7.30pm
On-Line over Zoom**

Present

Ruth-Ann Leak
Barry Murphy
Helen Lawson
Graham Cawdell
Colm Madden
George Keegan
Kieran Flynn
Padraig Keogh & Elizabeth
Nuala O'Malley
Jon Freeston
Colin Guilfoyle
Nathy Gilligan
David Burke
Ann Horan
Gerard Duane

Apologies

Henry Kenner

Welcome and Meet & Greet

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited each to introduce themselves with a bit of background information and their favourite bird.

Minutes of the Last Meeting and Matters Arising

The minutes of 1st December meeting were read over by Ruth-Ann. Feedback was given as follows:

Youth events - approached BWI who said they could be problematic due to child protection issues and any events with under 18 year olds should ensure that parents / guardians are in attendance. Over 18 year olds / young adult events could be organised with local colleges etc.

Website

Barry Murphy has been working on recreating the website and shared with us his work to date. He has downloaded all the pages from the existing website and is working with WordPress. This would mean changing the domain name of the website, and unfortunately BirdWatchMayo.com is not available. Barry will look into other domain name options. In the meantime he requested photographs for the new website, and some of the committee agreed to forward. Also information for populating the webpages.

Mailing & Text Lists

BWI Mailing to members - Niall Hatch is hoping to get an upto date list of all members in Mayo who have given their email details, and will be looking to contact them by email providing information about the Mayo Branch and how they can sign up for email alerts.

Ruth-Ann explained that all email recipients had been contacted and asked whether they would be willing to remain on the list - opting in rather than opting out. As a result a fresh emailing list has been created, indicating whether the recipient is a member or non member, more work needs to be done with this in relation to other organisations.

The problem with texting was discussed as it is now costing to send mass texts. The idea of setting up a Whats App group was discussed if people agree, also moving the text list onto a web text service. Ruth-Ann to look into this further.

Events

An update on the canceling of the Westport outing was given.

So far we have the event at Belleek Woods on 26th March 11am as agreed. Ruth-Ann will ask the local NPWS Warden, Hazel Doyle, along with Robbie Reynolds, whether they can attend.

Graham Cawdell discussed the possibility of an evening walk, further work needs to be done on this.

George Keegan said he was in touch with Gordan Darcy who would be willing to give a talk for the branch, charging for diesel only. This was considered a great idea by the committee, however we should charge for admission and the branch should pay for Gordan Darcy's costs. George will look into this to arrange for a time during March in Westport.

Barry suggested that we should have another event around the same time as the canceled Westport outing. Agreed that an outing to Mularanny will take place, meet 11am on Sunday 30th January by the beach. To be an informal event.

Also discussed was a walk along the Erris Loop to see the seabirds. June probably the best time, perhaps also a Belmullet outing around this time with Dave Suddaby?

Other activities

Suggested project with nestboxes.

Time prevented us from discussing other possible activities the branch could be involved with.

AOB

Padraig Keogh gave feedback on the BWI CEO online meeting with reference to the problems at BWI. The CEO, Chris Corrigan, introduced himself, along with the present financial position of BWI, which is looking more positive. Last year the annual appeal raised €180k and membership was up. He said that he is only an interim CEO and the Board needs new members, and regretted that members had heard of the intervention by the Charity Commission via the media, as there was no time to notify members of this.

Graham Cawdell mentioned his YouTube page where he has videos and photographs of birds, and asked whether they could be linked to the Facebook Page

Next meeting

It was agreed that further meetings should take place every two months, on the 3rd Wednesday of the month.

The next meeting will be Wednesday 16th March 7.30pm

Meeting closed at 9.10pm