

Celebrate the Return of the Light Bellied Brent Goose to Dublin Bay

North Bull Island Visitor Centre and Causeway

Saturday 11th November 10 am to 4 pm

As part of the Annual Brent Goose Ambassador Project/ Dublin Urban Birds Project Dublin City Council will be hosting an open day on North Bull Island on Saturday 11th November 2017 from 10 am until 4 pm. Join us for family friendly illustrated talks, guided identification of waders in the wild and interactive displays. The Light Bellied Brent Geese are a protected species under wildlife legislation and are listed as amber on "The Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland List". You can help with their conservation by participating in this citizen science event.

- **Visitor Centre: 10 am, 11am, 12 noon and 2pm.**

Illustrated talk by DCC Biodiversity Officer on "The amazing story of the survival and migration of the Light Bellied Brent Goose and how it is estimated to fly over 50,000 km per year on a plant diet even though it only weighs about 2 kg."



- **Visitor Centre: 10 am till 4 pm.** Interactive Exhibition on The Brent Goose Ambassador Project. How the Children of Dublin have stood up for their goose and Dublin Bay Biosphere. You too can Join up to become an Ambassador.

- **The Causeway: 10 am, 11am 12 noon 2 pm.** View the Geese and other winter waders using scopes and binoculars and with expert instruction from BirdWatch Ireland. Free educational material to take away.

It is that time of year again when the Brent Geese are back on the mudflats and marshes of North Bull Island gobbling up the eelgrass and green algae after their long journey from the Canadian high Arctic. We would like you to join us celebrating their return. People of all ages can hear the story of the Goose and how they can become actively engaged in its conservation and its protection this winter.



Brent Geese at North Bull Island Marshes and Mud Flats . Photos Brendan Norris Jardin and DCC Parks

The Story of the Light Bellied Brent Goose

The Light-Bellied Brent Goose is one of Dublin City's most iconic wintering bird species. It arrives at North Bull Island from the Canadian High Arctic each autumn in October and stays until late March. By January they are regularly seen grazing on the City's playing pitches and open spaces, as the eelgrass (*Zostera*) which they usually eat at North Bull Island and Sandymount Strand has been depleted. If the

geese are disturbed when they are feeding on grass or eel grass they become stressed, will fly away and lose their fat reserves. This effects their ability to fly back a distance of 4,500km to the Arctic and to breed and produce the next generation of geese.

People, dogs and dogs off a lead are the main causes of disturbance.

What it means to be a Brent Goose Ambassador

In the last 3 years over 300 children from 4th class primary schools and scouting organisations have taken up the challenge to become UN Brent Goose Ambassadors. They have also activated their friends, family and community to become involved. At least 200 more children will achieve ambassador certification this winter. This open day aims to encourage all citizens to become involved in daily actions to protect the Geese this winter primarily through mindful behaviour when enjoying the great outdoors where the Geese are present.



The Brent Goose Project invites people to become ambassadors for the geese. Their role is to raise awareness of the geese among family and friends, to practice and promote good behaviour when encountering the geese and other wildlife, and to recognise and promote the UNESCO Dublin Bay Biosphere as an integral part of their City. Ambassadors visit North Bull Island or another part of the Biosphere to see and identify the geese as they graze on the mudflats, marshes and open spaces.

On completion of an activity which promotes and monitors the geese e.g. an exhibition, taking a ring reading or flock and location count the Ambassadors are certified by Dublin City Council Parks and landscape Services and the Lord Mayor. Their work is posted on a designated BirdWatch Ireland website and exhibited in Civic Offices Wood Quay , local Libraries and Civic Centres. In the event of extreme stormy weather this event will be cancelled.



A tale of two days In October Storm Brian advances on Bull Island and a May day viewing the wildlife of Dublin Bay.

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