

FREE MUTE SWAN RINGING DEMONSTRATION

SAT FEB 6th 10 am until 11 am

An Event Hosted by Dublin City Council Biodiversity

Fr Collins Park

RAMSAR International [World Wetlands Day 2016](#) was on Feb 2. Dublin City Council Parks are continuing the celebration by joining the **Irish Midland Ringing Group** in [Fr. Collins Park](#) to catch, measure and ring the Mute Swans as part of research to understand and protect the Swans in Dublin and the midlands. This event is for Children and Adults who are interested in wildlife. It will be a rare opportunity to see Swans up close and to see how they are measured and fitted with rings for future identification.



At this event the Mute Swans in the park will be caught, measured and given a numbered ring.



By also giving each Swan a unique number, on a lightweight plastic ring, the Swans can be tracked monitored over the coming years without the need to re-catch them. The male in the Fr Collins Park is already more than 9 years old.



Last year's cygnets will be chased away by their parents in February before nest building starts and the dispersal and survival of the cygnets is monitored

Why the Irish Midlands Ringing Group are Ringing Swans

The Irish Midlands Ringing Group (IMRG) was established in 2013 to promote the ringing, study and conservation of Irish birds. The group has 21 members all of whom are licensed and operate under the protocols of the British Trust for Ornithology and the National Parks and Wildlife Service. More information on the group can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/IrishMidlandsRinging?fref=ts>

and <https://irishmidlandsringing.wordpress.com/>

The ringing activity at Fr Collins Park on Feb 6th is part of their broader study of the ecology, productivity, survival rate and behaviour of Mute Swans breeding in Dublin. The Mute Swan is one of Ireland's largest, most easily identifiable and popular birds. They are a species that the general public can easily identify and are found in parks, ponds and canals throughout the country. These traits make it an ideal indicator species in monitoring the health of wetland habitats, detecting pollution incidents and an ambassador in encouraging citizen science.

Mute Swans are long lived birds with a typical lifespan of 10 years. Birds reach maturity at 3 years of age when they begin to breed on ponds, lakes and rivers. Typical mute swan broods comprise 6 cygnets. Juvenile birds have a survival rate of 0.42 to the age of 3.

The researchers are monitoring the Mute Swan Nests in the greater Dublin Area to see what the extent of the population is and how to identify such factors such as predation, vandalism, poisoning or collisions that may be impacting on its productivity and survival. The results of this study will be compared with the findings of Dr Richard Collins research between 1983 and 1993 on the Mute Swan in Dublin. They can also be used to inform decision making on habitat management and minimising risks to Mute Swans and other water birds.

Fr Collins Park and its wetlands.

Fr Collins Park is Ireland's first wholly sustainable park opened in May 2009. The park is located in the heart of the 'North Fringe' - an area in the northeast of Dublin containing the new residential areas of Clongriffin and Belmayne. The park is accessible by car and lies beside the Hole in the Wall road in Donaghmede, or alternatively by bus (Number 15) and by train to Clongriffin station. The park extends to 26 hectares and was named after a much respected local parish priest who was instrumental in its original acquisition for development as a public park. Facilities

include a skate park, fitness trail, playgrounds, sports fields, ornamental lake and windturbines.

Wetlands are areas saturated by water, whether natural or artificial, permanent or temporary, static or flowing, fresh, brackish, or marine. Wetland habitat types in Ireland are typically marsh, swamp, bog, fen, turlough, lagoons, salt marshes, estuaries and wet woodlands.

Worldwide wetlands ensure humanity has fresh water, they purify harmful waste from water, they provide a food source mainly in terms of fish and rice for billions of people and many livelihoods are dependent on them especially in developing countries.

Wetlands are bursting with biodiversity and provide a refuge for wildlife. They offer us a protection against the extreme effects of climate change, flooding, coastal erosion and drought. Wetlands are places to play and visit and are key sites for tourism, water sports, fishing and nature exploration. A future without wetlands would result in the loss of all these key services, particularly access to clean water. According to RAMSAR, the international champion for wetlands, an estimated 64% of the world's wetlands have disappeared since 1900.

There are three main types of wetlands in Dublin City

Marine and coastal wetlands. Examples are the mudflats, salt meadows and dune slacks at North Bull Island and the Strand at Sandymount. These areas are part of Dublin Bay UNESCO Biosphere.

Freshwater wetlands are typically marsh, swamps, wet grasslands, ponds streams and canals. These can be found in the City's river bank parks along the Liffey, Tolka, and Dodder and at the formal and woodland ponds at St Anne Park and Bushy Park.

Constructed wetlands can be seen at Tolka Valley Park, and Ballymun's Poppintree Park and Fr Collins Park. These were built to alleviate flooding and to purify water from old landfill and road run off.

Our wetlands in Dublin are very special and some are of European importance for wildlife. At this time of year they are a great place to see winter water birds like ducks, the Light Bellied Brent Goose and waders. They are a key part of the water cycle for the city ensuring that Dublin Bay is an outstanding natural resource.

The most important wetlands in Dublin City are in [North Bull Island](#) and [Sandymount Strand](#) – both are designated by the RAMSAR International Treaty on Wetlands and are part of the [UNESCO- designated Dublin Bay Biosphere](#).