

Aquatic Plant Project

3 years of aquatic plant training and recording
across Ireland



Why aquatic plants?

Aquatic plants are often under-recorded due to the challenges both of **accessing** them and **identifying** them, but they are essential to understanding the health of our waterways.



What are the aims of the project?

1. To improve coverage of aquatic plant recording in Ireland, including following up on areas which had been well-recorded in the past to allow assessment of changes.
2. To help botanists and other enthusiasts to improve their aquatic plant identification skills and confidence so that more people feel enabled to record aquatic plants.

Who is involved?

This project has been generously funded by NPWS and CEDaR. Many people helped with development and management, including Maria Long, Robert Northridge, John Faulkner, Paul Green, Sarah Pierce, Jim McIntosh, Edwina Cole, and other Cfl members. Training and recording was led by aquatic plant experts and VCRs including Nick Stewart, Cilian Roden, Lynda Weekes, Chris Preston, Paul Green, John Faulkner, John Conaghan. The project would be nothing without its participants: 180 in-person and hundreds more online!

Aquatic Plant Project

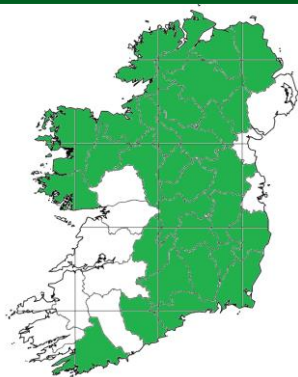
What have we achieved in 3 years?



Aquatic Plant Recording

Recording has taken place at hundreds of sites across **29 vice-counties**, resulting in around **7500** new records.

Records cover more than 70 species and hybrids, around 400 new hectad records, and many interesting and rare finds, including protected species like *Callitriche truncata*.



In-person training

Our field and classroom-based training has reached 180 people, and included:

- 3 aquatic plant identification workshops
- 41 field training days covering methods, identification and recording
- 5 days of small-group herbarium-based mentoring for recorders

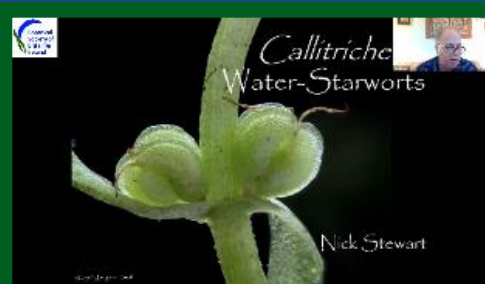
Online training & resources

We have run 5 training webinars led by Nick Stewart, with a combined live audience of 330 people. Recordings of these have also been posted online, and together have had more than 3400 views.

- [Introduction to Aquatic Plant ID](#)
- [Stonewort ID](#)
- [Water-starwort ID](#)
- [Water-crowfoot ID](#)
- [Broad-leaved Pondweed ID](#)

We also ran an online workshop with live identification of specimens, and hosted a talk by Nick Stewart on identification of tricky species at our Autumn Meeting 2019.

Links to videos, presentation slides, keys and more are all available on the [Aquatic Plant Project webpage](#).



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What comes next?



Plans for 2022 and beyond

We know that is a lot more work to do on aquatic plants in Ireland and hoping to keep expanding the project in the future. We are just beginning to plan for next year, and would love to hear your ideas!



Targeted Recording

Our aim for future recording will be to re-survey sites which were surveyed thoroughly in the past so we are better able to assess change, as well as providing baseline data for the future.

We are also interested in sites where previously-recorded species have not be re-found in recent years and where new species have emerged.

Field-based training

We are hoping to offer even more hands-on training in 2022, for people to get their hands wet and build their confidence on identifying and recording aquatic plants.

We are also hoping to record some *videos from the field*, so those who can't attend in-person can get a better feel for field methods and identification.



Support for the project

The Aquatic Plant Project has been generously supported by grants from the National Parks and Wildlife Service (RoI) and the Centre for Environmental Data and Recording (NI)



An Roinn Tithíochta,
Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreacht
Department of Housing,
Local Government and Heritage



National Parks & Wildlife Service



CEDaR
Centre for Environmental
Data and Recording