



THE DUBLIN NATURALISTS' FIELD CLUB
PROGRAMME of EVENTS
April to June 2026

Annual General Meeting 2026

The 2026 Annual General Meeting of The Dublin Naturalists' Field Club will take place online on Thursday 21st May. A separate notice, that includes the agenda and details of any motions proposed, will be sent to members in advance.

Day	Date	Month	Title	Leader	Location
Saturday	4th	April	Plant Identification Workshop	Various	National Botanic Gardens, Dublin
Saturday	11th	April	Woodland Walk	Sunniva Hanley	Glen of the Downs, Wicklow
Sunday	26th	April	Recording the Flora of Co. Wicklow	Alexis FitzGerald	Donard Sugar-loaf, Co Wicklow
Saturday	2nd	May	Plant Identification Workshop	Various	National Botanic Gardens, Dublin
Saturday	9th	May	Woodland Flora: Bluebells & <i>Allium</i>	Charles Shier	Killinthomas, Co. Kildare
Thursday	21st	May	Annual General Meeting	-	Online Meeting
Saturday	23rd	May	Discovering Species and Habitats	Una McGrath, Tom Miniter, C. Shier	Drumconrath, Co. Meath
Wednesday	3rd	June	Plant Identification – <i>Hieracium</i> species	Tim Rich	National Botanic Gardens, Dublin
Saturday	13th	June	Plant recording on the Sutton Shoreline	Declan Doogue	Sutton, Co. Dublin
Mon - Thurs	15th-18th	June	Joint BNFC/DNFC outing to the Lough Ree Region	Various	Hodson Bay Hotel, Athlone
Saturday	20th	June	Recording the Flora of Co. Wicklow	Alexis FitzGerald	Keadeen Mount., Co. Wicklow
Saturday	27th	June	Sand Dune Grasses	Margaret Norton	Mornington, Co. Meath

DNFC Plant Identification Workshops

The DNFC workshop sessions are held in the National Botanic Gardens, usually on the first Saturday of each month. For many years, the DNFC has had access to the room where we conduct our plant identification workshop sessions, by kind permission of Dr. Matthew Jebb, Director of the National Botanic Gardens.

Matthew has now retired and we thank him for his long-term interest and support which has directly helped the development of Irish field botany and botanists.

Saturday 4th April 2026

Plant Identification Workshop National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin

An Irish Materia Medica - Pat Lenihan

Tadhg Ó Cuinn's '*Materia Medica*' (1415) is a translation to Irish of a body of Latin medical texts available in Europe with the view of making them available in the vernacular for Gaelic physicians. It was translated to English by Micheál Ó Conchubhair, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, based on a 15th century manuscript in TCD. It is often considered the first Irish Herbal. This presentation by Pat Lenihan will discuss the early history of medicine in Ireland as outlined in the text and make extensive references to the wide range of plant medicinal remedies described by Ó Cuinn.

***Taraxacum* - Declan Doogue**

Research by DNFC botanical recorders has resulted in significant additions to the Irish flora, within the native and adventive Dandelions. This workshop will include a revision of the commoner sectional groups, of *Taraxacum*, using freshly-collected material from the widespread Sections *Hamata*, *Celtica*, and *Taraxacum* as well as exhibits of some additional material from the smaller sections, previously determined by A. J. Richards. There will be a short walk in the immediate vicinity of the gardens if weather and time permits.

Members should bring BSBI Handbook No. 23 '*Field Handbook to British and Irish Dandelions*' by A. J. Richards and their hand lenses.

Saturday 11th April 2026

Woodland Walk – Glen of the Downs SAC Risk Level 2

The Glen of the Downs hosts an old sessile oak woodland. We will begin our outing by revisiting part of the looped trail on the west side of the Glen and examine the woodland for spring flowering plants. We will then visit a section of woodland on the east side of the Glen. There are uneven tracks and some ascents and descents, so strong footwear or hiking boots are essential.

Leader: Sunniva Hanley

Bring: Field lens, ID books, lunch, hot drink, waterproof clothes and sturdy boots are advised.

Sunday 26th April 2026

Recording the Flora of Co. Wicklow Donard Sugarloaf - Risk Level 2

The spring flora in the area of the Donard Sugarloaf and perhaps the Glen of Imaal and the nearby River Slaney will be recorded; we hope to see a good range of *Taraxacum* agg. specimens and other spring plants as part of this outing. Plant records will be contributed to the DNFC Wicklow Supplement project. Previous records from the area include *Hammarbya paludosa* and *Oreopteris limbosperma*.

Leader: Alexis FitzGerald

Bring: Identification books, field lens, walking boots, raingear and lunch. Copies of JP Brunner's '*Flora of County Wicklow*' would be useful.

Saturday 2nd May 2026

Plant Identification Workshop National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin

An Introduction to the Identification of Grasses - Various DNFC members

The first flush of grasses will be well underway and members will be welcome to bring in fresh material for discussion and identification. This session will provide a general introduction to the grasses, and will be followed in the next programme (July-September) by close-focus sessions on the more difficult genera.

The standard BSBI Handbook No. 13, '*Grasses of the British Isles*' by Tom Cope and Alan Gray will be used but, if available, members should also bring various editions of C. E. Hubbard's '*Grasses*', which has excellent illustrations. The NBDC has recently produced a useful '*Identification Guide to Ireland's Grasses*'.

The Plants and Vegetation of Wales, in Relation to the Irish flora - Ciarán Flynn

As the nearest landmass to many parts of eastern Ireland, Wales shares a broadly similar flora with Ireland. Some differences are apparent, however. We will discuss these differences, describe some of Wales' outstanding botanical sites, and consider the complex issue of postglacial colonisation.

Introducing Umbellifers - Various DNFC Members

The Umbellifers include a number of familiar culinary herbs and root vegetables, as well as some well-publicised poisonous species. Their accurate identification was and is therefore of great importance. The BSBI Handbook No. 2 '*Umbellifers of the British Isles*', by T. G. Tutin is a very useful guide, and is very well illustrated. Many other identification guides are also suitable. The fruits of many species are particularly characteristic and members are welcome to exhibit any material which might be of interest.

Fern Hybrids - Declan Doogue

Hybrids in the *Dryopteris dilatata* and *Dryopteris carthusiana* (*D. spinulosa*) complex.

Saturday 9th May 2026

Bluebells & *Allium*, Killinthomas Rathangan, Co. Kildare - Risk Level 2

Killinthomas Wood, just north of Rathangan, is an old woodland area that was replanted in the post-war years. It is being managed primarily for biodiversity and recreation, with a mixture of broadleaves dominated by beech, oak and ash on a mineral soil island and coniferous species on the surrounding peatlands. Killinthomas is noted for its carpets of bluebells and *Allium* in the spring.

Leader: Charles Shier

Bring: Identification books, hand lens, walking boots, raingear and lunch.

Thursday 21st May 2026

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of The Dublin Naturalists' Field Club will be held online at 7.30 p.m. on Thursday 21st May 2026. A separate notice, that includes the agenda and details of Directors retiring and seeking re-election, will be circulated to members in advance.

Saturday 23rd May 2026

**Habitats & Species Discovery
Drumconrath, Co. Meath - Risk Level 2**

This will be an outing of discovery, exploring the habitats and species present on a landholding owned by one of our members near Drumconrath, Co. Meath. We would expect to see species associated with drumlin grassland areas, naturally regenerating woodland, old native woodland, wetter and heavier soils and an ancient rath.

Leaders: Una McGrath, Tom Minter & Charles Shier

Bring: Floras and hand lens, lunch, walking boots and raingear if the forecast suggests rain.

Wednesday 3rd June 2026

***Hieracium* Identification Workshop – Tim Rich
National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin**

Various members of the DNFC have been working on their separate county flora projects, in the course of which, they have encountered, photographed or collected *Hieracium* material. Tim Rich is the acknowledged expert of this group, (as well of many others). This meeting will be an opportunity for members to have their material examined and discussed. A number of books on *Hieracium* including the very useful and significant '*Atlas of British and Irish Hawkweeds*' by David McCosh & Tim Rich (2018) will be available.

Hawkweeds are quite rare in the east of Ireland and should not needlessly be collected from their very restricted sites, other than for expert determination. However, the more widespread Mouse-ear Hawkweed, *Pilosella officinarum* has several subspecies which deserve closer scrutiny, and are to be encountered on a variety of substrates from sand-dune to bare acid rocks.

Saturday 13th June 2026

**Plant Recording on the Sutton Shoreline
Risk Level 1**

We will explore the botany of the shoreline at Sutton and later examine the flora of the old St. Fintan's Graveyard. The event will conclude at 3.00.p.m.

Leader: Declan Doogue

Bring: Identification books, field lens and lunch.

Mon. 15 – Thur. 18 June 2026

Joint BNFC/DNFC Outing to Lough Ree Region

A 4-day joint outing has been organised to the Lough Ree Region, commencing at lunchtime on Monday 15th and continuing until lunchtime on Thursday 18th June. The outing will be based at the Hodson Bay Hotel, on the western shore of Lough Ree and will visit a number of sites of interest in Longford and Roscommon.

The outing is open to all members of the Belfast and Dublin Field Clubs and their guests. Rooms have been reserved at the Hodson Bay Hotel, but must be booked before the end of April. Details about the outing were circulated to members at the end of January. Further information and booking forms are available from the Honorary Secretary at honorary.secretary@dnfc.net.

Saturday 20th June 2026

**Recording the Flora of Co. Wicklow
Keadeen Mountain - Risk Level 2**

The flora in the area of Keadeen Mountain and Derrynamuck will be recorded. We hope to re-find a good range of montane species, not seen since Brunner's time, as part of this outing.. Plant records will be contributed to the DNFC Wicklow Supplement project. Brunner records from the area include *Hymenophyllum* species, *Dryopteris aemula*, *Lycopodium clavatum*, *Melampyrum pratense* and *Vaccinium vitis-idaea*.

Leader: Alexis FitzGerald

Bring: Identification books, field lens, walking boots, raingear and lunch. Copies of JP Brunner's '*Flora of County Wicklow*' would be useful.

Saturday 27th June 2026

**Open-air study of Sand Dune Grasses
Mornington - Risk Level 1**

The sand dunes at Mornington support a rich flora, which includes an interesting range of specialised grasses. These shall be the focus of the outing, but we shall no doubt also encounter other sand dunes rarities known from this site. This is a long-established venue for field outing/excursions, with visits by Praeger, DNFC and BNFC stretching back to the 1890s.

Leader: Margaret Norton

Bring: Identification books, field lens, walking boots, raingear, suncream/hats and lunch/snack/water.