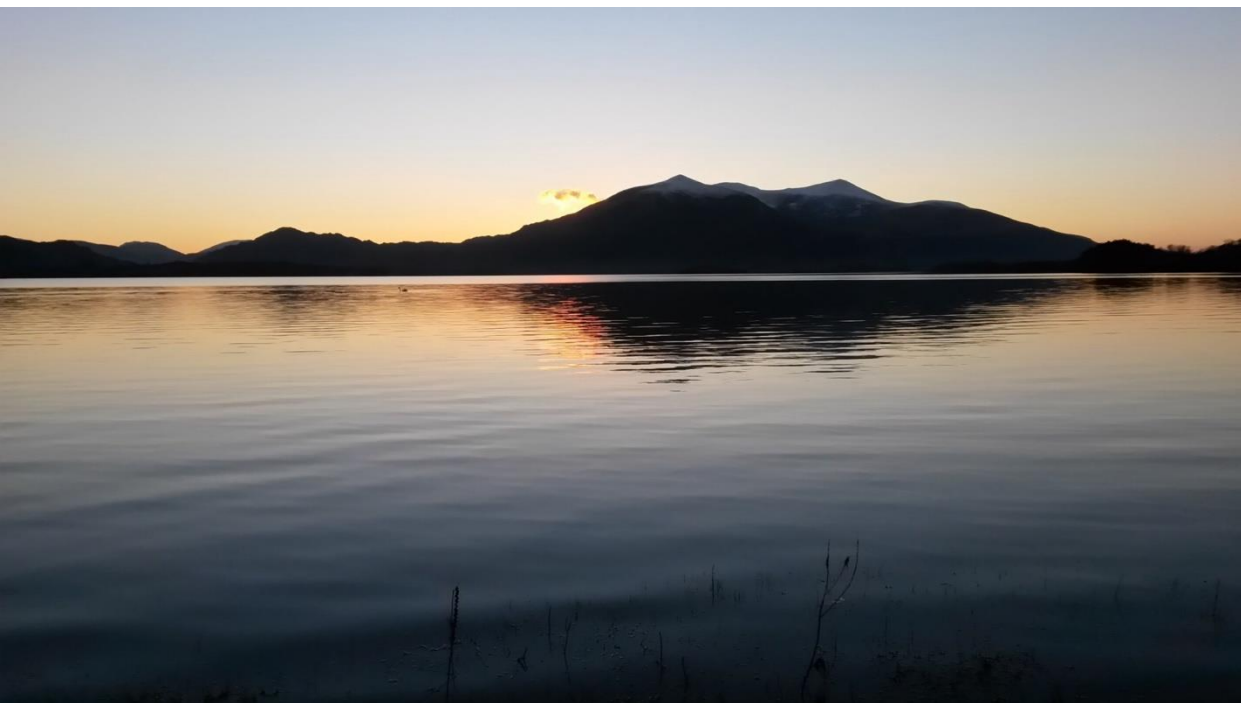


40 Years of Changing Waterfowl Use of Lough Leane, Killarney National Park, Co. Kerry



Áine Ní Shúilleabháin

14th & 15th October 2025

Killarney Plaza Hotel



Conference 2025

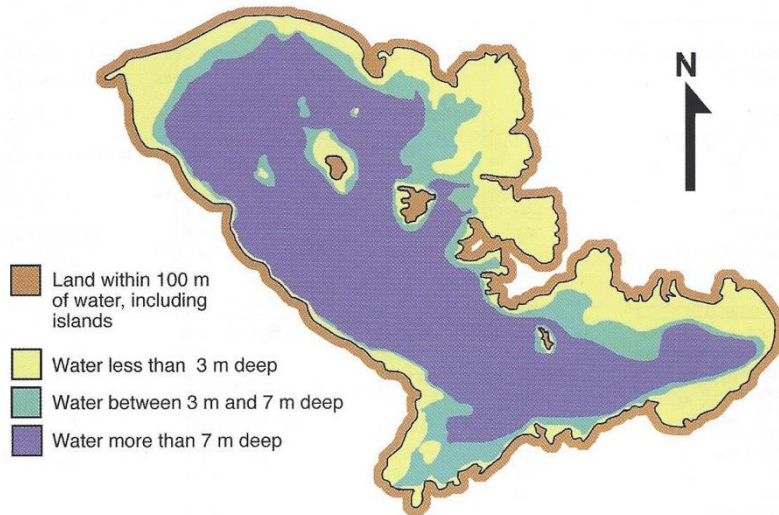
**Mirrors of Change: Reflections on Irish Lakes
Past, Present and Future.**

**Killarney
14th and 15th October 2025**

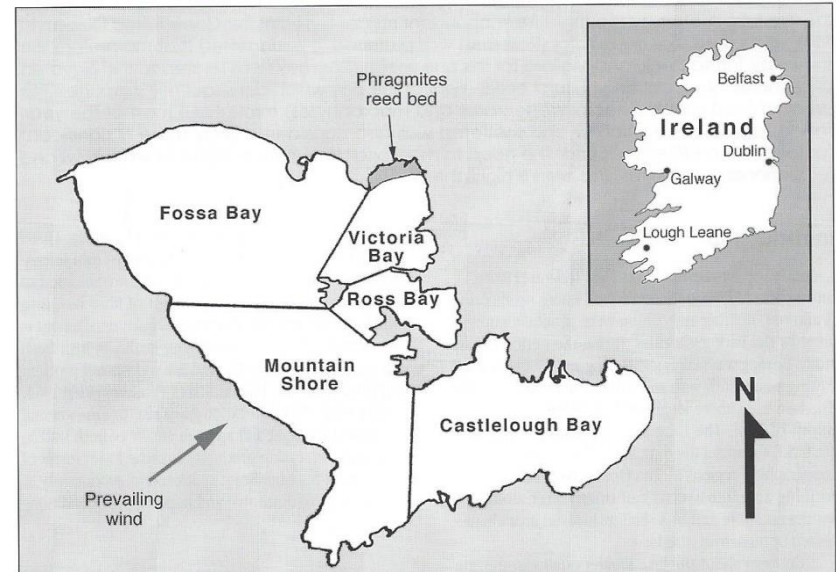


Lough Leane, Killarney National Park

DEPTH CONTOURS



WATERFOWL CENSUS ZONES



WATERFOWL CENSUS METHODS LOUGH LEANE CO. KERRY

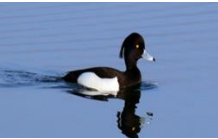
Count by Boat

- Two people travelling parallel with the shore and around islands
- Identify & count waterfowl
- Record species and locations both on maps and in excel files



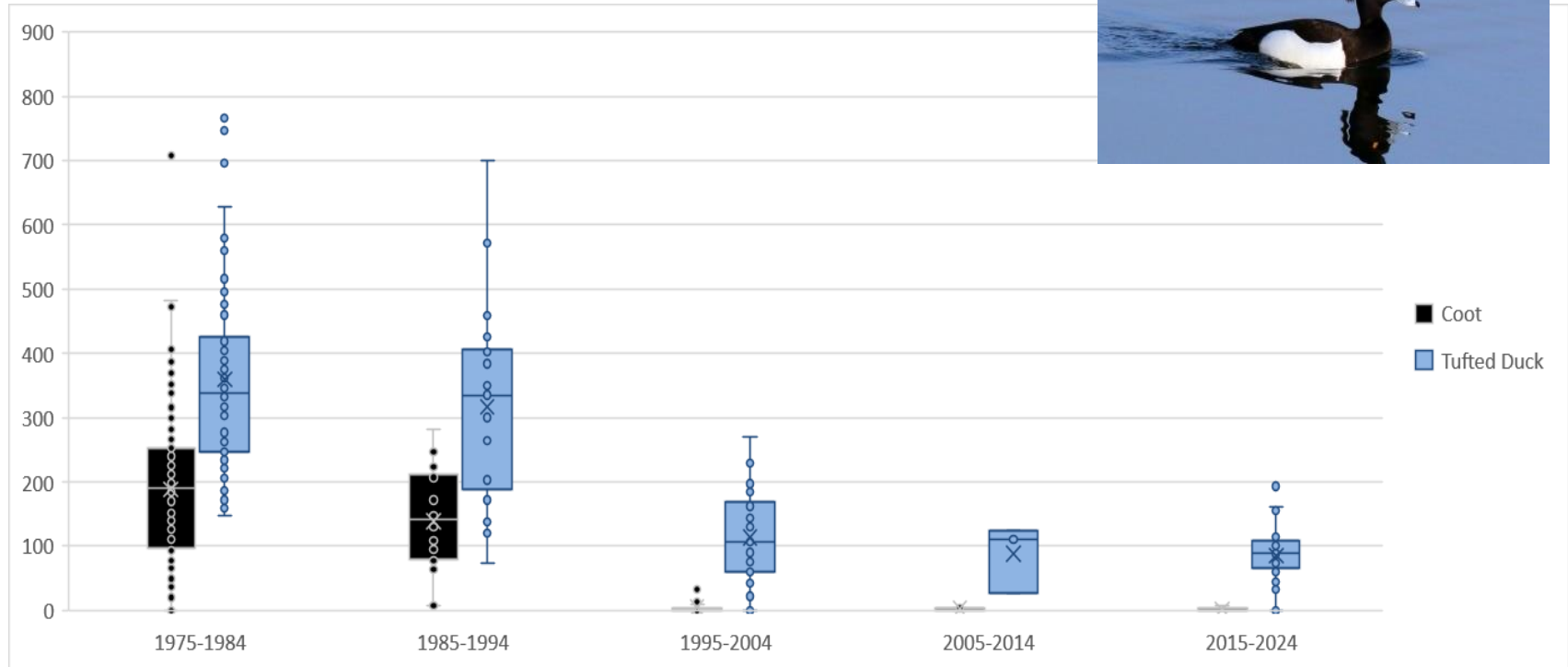
Winter Period - Maximum Numbers Recorded per Decade

September to March









Decade	Coot	Pochard	Tufted Duck	Teal	Gadwall	Mute Swan	Mallard
1975-1984	708	102	767	404	0	36	575
1985-1994	281	101	701	173	0	66	472
1995-2004	40	12	270	325	0	65	297
2005-2014	4	0	125	375	0	60	218
2015-2024	8	7	193	306	27	46	312

Tufted Duck (*Aythya fuligula*) & Coot (*Fulica atra*) 1978 to 2024: September – March



Summer Period - Maximum Numbers Recorded per Decade

April to August							
	Coot	Great-crested Grebe	Teal	Tufted Duck	Tufted Duck <i>May to August</i>	Gadwall	Little Egret
Decades							
1975-1984	232	13	37	441	441	2	0
1985-1994	39	7	20	215	215	1	0
1995-2004	5	5	39	100	100	0	0
2005-2014~	3	1	116^	36	10	0	0
2015-2024	9	1	77	103*	35	6	7
~Very few counts				*11 April 2018			
			^29 Aug 2007				

Mallard – Moults - Ross Bay, Lough Leane



Mute Swan – Moulting - Castlelough Bay, Lough Leane



WATERFOWL MOVEMENT LOUGH LEANE CO. KERRY

Trapping (1979 to 1990s)

- **Three different Traps used**
 - Shoreline Trap
 - Floating Trap
 - Diving Duck Trap



Mallard & Mute Swan Returns	RETURNS of OTHER SPECIES
<p>Generally localised movement Main returns Mallard were North, East & West of Killarney Within 40 mile radius of Lough Leane</p> <p>Main returns of Mute Swans were North & West of Lough Leane within 30.2 km radius of Lough Leane</p>	<p>Tufted Duck 1 return from Lough Derg, Co Tipperary, year later 1 return from Finland 5 years after ringing 1 controlled on Lough Leane within a year</p> <p>Pochard 1 shot Denmark 1.5 years after ringing</p>
<p>Long term return of a Mallard 9 years after ringing at Ross Bay, Lough Leane 1 Mallard return - from County Down</p>	<p>Coot 1 return shot 7 km from Lough Leane 1 return West Yorkshire UK 3 years after ringing</p> <p>Teal 4 shot less than 20km from Lough Leane 2 shot in Britain 1 recovered Sweden 2 years after ringing 1 shot in Russia 4 months after ringing</p>

Potential Reasons for Population Changes

Current Pressures & Future Threats (I-WeBS 2009-2016)	Potential Additional Factors on Lough Leane
Climate Change	Loss of Breeding Populations (e.g. Tufted Duck & Coot)
Water Quality/Eutrophication	Food Availability - diversity and quantity
Recreational and Other Disturbance	Competition for Food
Hunting	Changes and Fluctuations in Lake Water Levels

Much further analysis & study required

THANK YOU- MÍLE BUÍOCHAS

Boatman & Duck Count Assistant - John Micheal Lyne

Conservation Rangers — Tricia Beecher, Sam Bayley, Sean Forde, William Hunt, The Late Paudie O'Leary, John O'Connor, Kathryn Freeman, Brendan O'Shea, Padruig O'Sullivan, The late Terry Carruthers.

Killarney National Park Management - Eamonn Meskell, Mary Sheehan(DCO), Dan Kelleher, Danny O'Keeffe, Pat Dawson, The Late Frank Mc Mahon, Seamus Hassett

Mathamatician: Ciarán Ó Súilleabháin

Killarney National Park Staff — The late Pappa Lynch, Sonny O'Connell, The Late Paddy O'Sullivan, Kathleen O'Sullivan