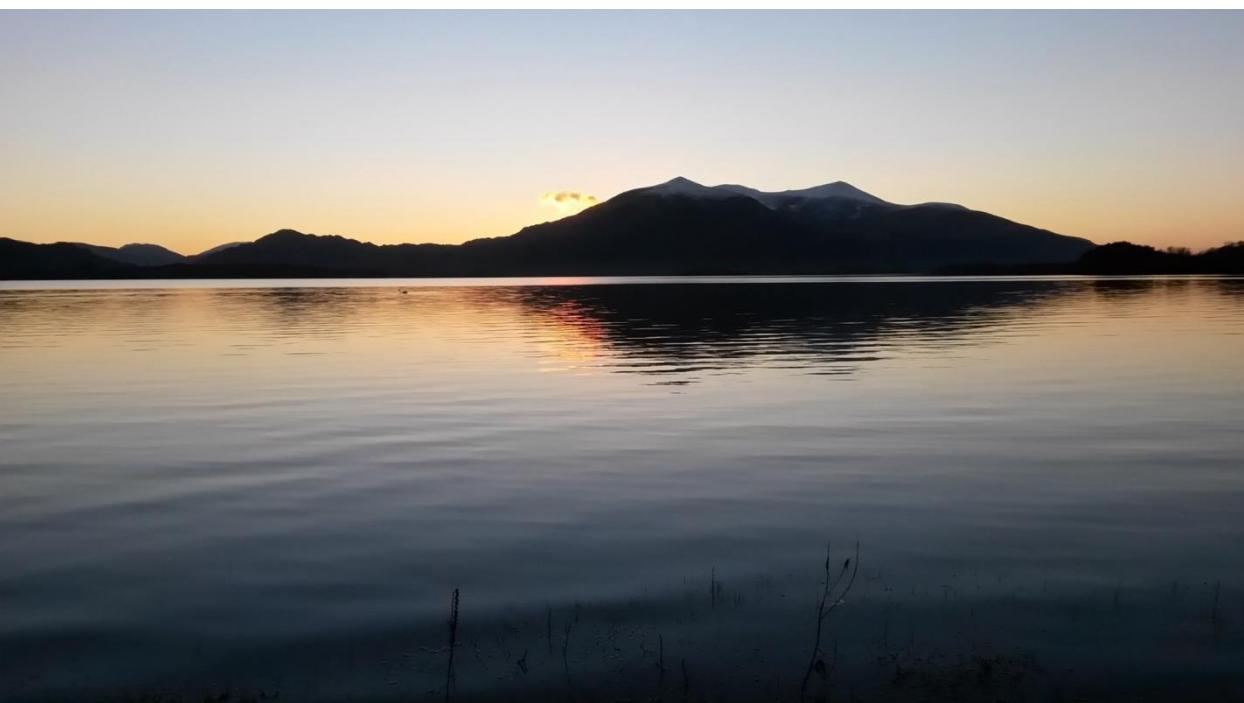


40 Years of Changing Waterfowl Use of Lough Leane, Killarney National Park, Co. Kerry



Áine Ní Shúilleabháin

14th & 15th October 2025

Killarney Plaza Hotel



Conference 2025

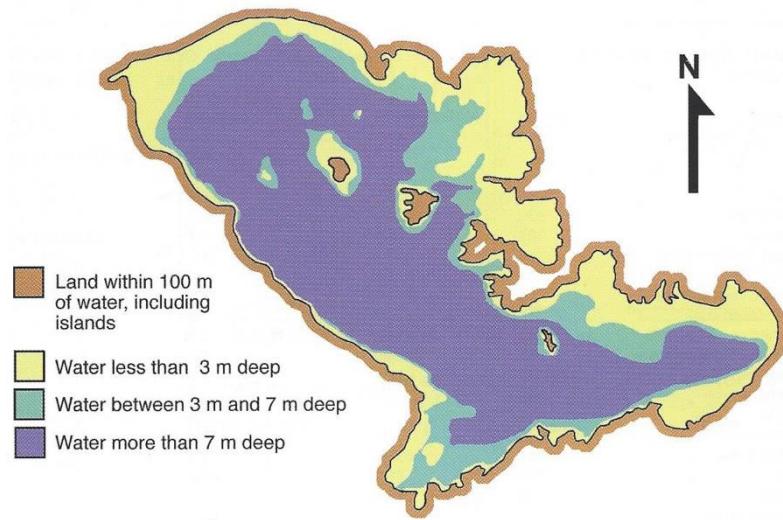
Mirrors of Change: Reflections on Irish Lakes
Past, Present and Future.

Killarney
14th and 15th October 2025

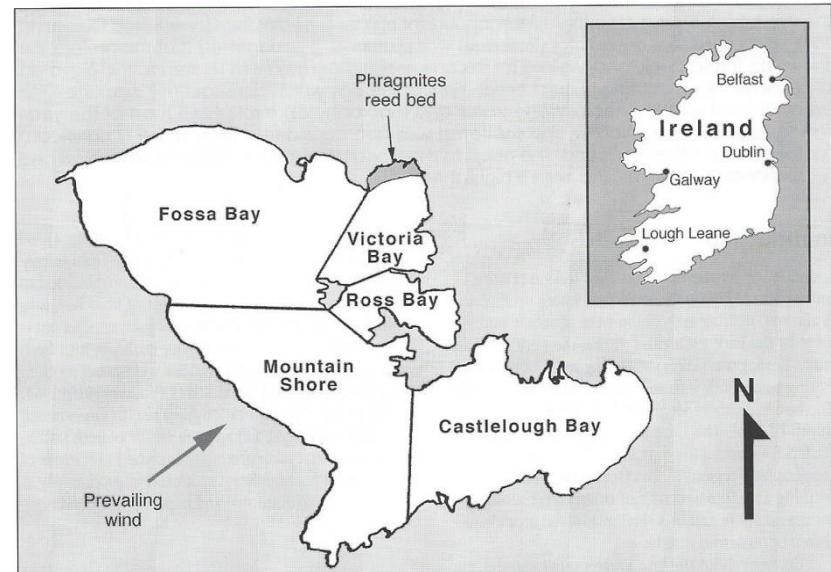


Lough Leane, Killarney National Park

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

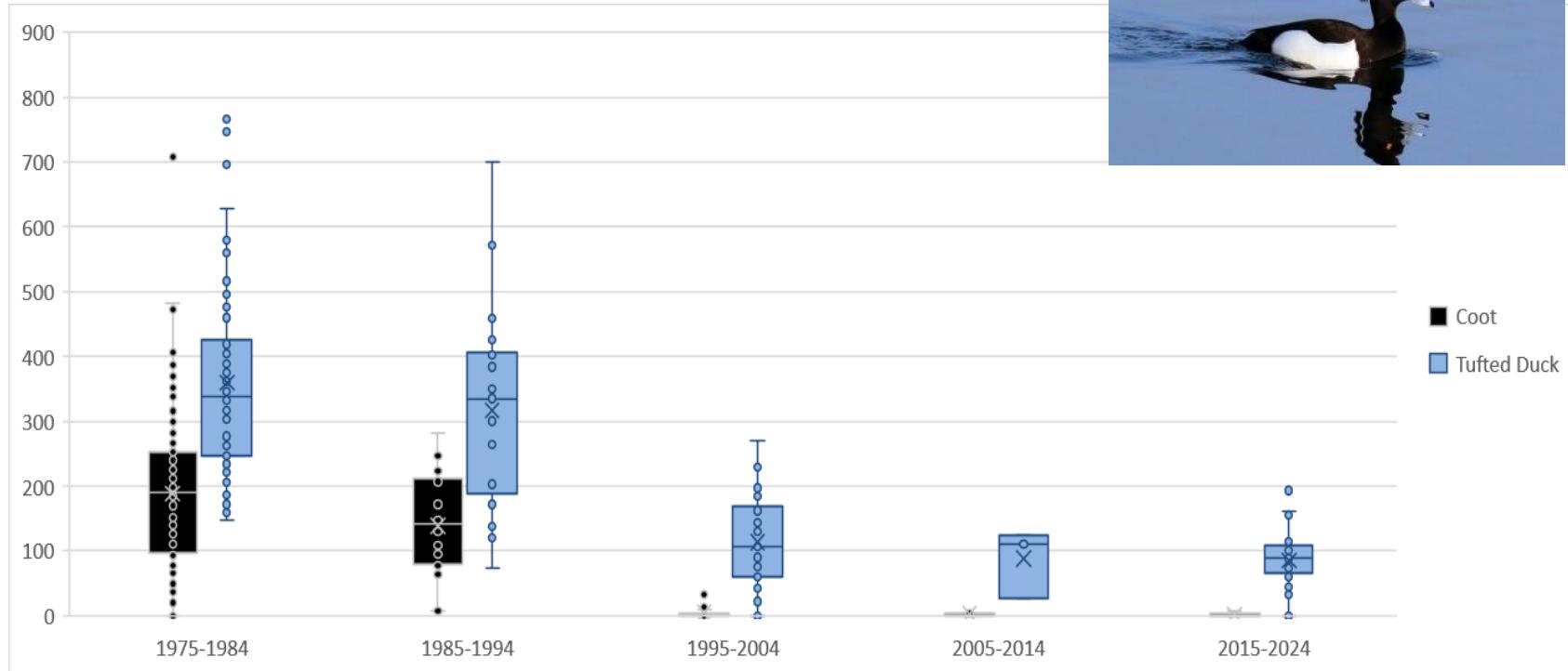


September to March

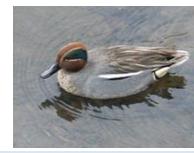
Decade	Coot	Pochard	Tufted Duck	Teal	Gadwall	Mute Swan	Mallard
1975-1984	708	102	767	404	0	36	575
1985-1994	281	101	701	173	0	66	472
1995-2004	40	12	270	325	0	65	297
2005-2014	4	0	125	375	0	60	218
2015-2024	8	7	193	306	27	46	312

Tufted Duck (*Aythya fuligula*) & Coot (*Fulica atra*)

1978 to 2024: September – March



Summer Period - Maximum Numbers Recorded per Decade



April to August

Decades	Coot	Great-crested Grebe	Teal	Tufted Duck	Tufted Duck <i>May to August</i>	Gadwall	Little Egret
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

*11 April
2018

~Very few counts

^29 Aug 2007

Mallard – Moult - Ross Bay, Lough Leane



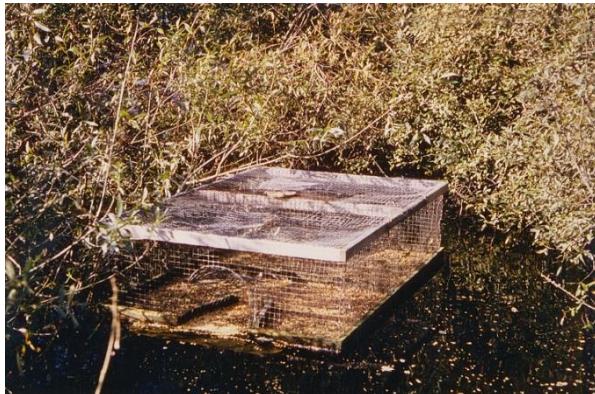
Mute Swan – Moult - Castlelough Bay, Lough Leane



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

Generally localised movement

Main returns Mallard were North, East & West of Killarney

Within 40 mile radius of Lough Leane

Main returns of Mute Swans were North & West of Lough Leane within 30.2 km radius of Lough Leane

Long term return of a Mallard

9 years after ringing at Ross Bay, Lough Leane

1 Mallard return - from County Down

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

Pochard

1 shot Denmark 1.5 years after ringing

Coot

1 return shot 7 km from Lough Leane

1 return West Yorkshire UK 3 years after ringing

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

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’Keefe, Pat Dawson, The Late Frank Mc Mahon, Seamus Hassett

Mathamatician: Ciarán Ó Súilleabhaín

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