

Ref: 2015S40/147

Sent: 09 January 2015 20:41

To: Nature Conservation

Subject: Uplands "burning" - a submission

Dear Sir/Madam , I am writing in connection with current deliberations around possible changes in law on the managing upland moors / bogs / peatlands etc.

Firstly , it seems almost self evident to Me that wholesale blanket burning of uplands (or lowlands) is just plain foolish. I lived in Australia where I witnessed many such burnings both intentional and accidental. The reality is that there are many many species of insects and animals who cannot avoid a fire and perish in it. This diminishes , in one fell swoop , the population of insects and animals that die. Other species of bird , animals etc that depend on these insects and animals suffer a massive decline in their food supply and either perish themselves or are forced to move on into other same species territories and end up fighting for both space and food.

Any burning , and there may be many instances of this , should be accompanied by an almighty attempt to ensure that animals and insects are encouraged to move before the fire is set. Unfortunately there will be eggs and larvae destroyed and this is a big negative with burning.

The present situation where setting fire is quite haphazard and indiscriminate has to change. Gorse is a curse and certain invasive species of plant are now well established such as Hog Weed .We can all understand the desire to get rid of these but the reality is that fires don't seem to achieve this - do they ?

Regarding hedgerows , these are in danger from a number of different sources as follows

- (i) Chemical applications by CoCo's and Farmers alike
- (ii) removal to increase tillage space or grazing.
- (iii) Careless cutting by CoCo's + Farmers.

Hedgerows are wildlife oases and are almost unique to Ireland now ...We have such a rich insect and bird and Mammal population that find food and shelter amongst the hedgerows .

We all appreciate that hedges have to be trimmed back for a number of reasons ranging from road safety to letting sufficient light in . We just need to constantly re-examine what we do to ensure it complies with best practice to preserve our rich wildlife .

Yours Sincerely