

Dear Heather Humphries - Please, please, please do not succumb to the non-evidence-based pressures of those who lobby for extended destruction of hedgerows. I am aware I am posting this after the deadline of 9th January. I am currently in the USA but feel it imperative to make my feelings known to support the present arrangement. These existing seasonal time-scales, incidentally, are often flouted by individual farmers and householders. It would be helpful if they were periodically reminded of the laws pertaining to our hedgerows.....perhaps by full-page advertisements in the national press in spring and in autumn?

Given the dearth of broad leaf woodland in Ireland, especially along the Western seaboard (which is where I have a small holding) our hedgerows are the only refuge for wildlife. Birds do not nest to schedule, some species starting late, some first-timers spending inordinate amount of time and energy trying to establish in an unsuitable site before finding a safe and adequate nesting-site.

Ireland had fewer bird and wild-life species than most other countries in Europe, and fewer still than other parts of the world. They need every chance they can. Please retain the present arrangement which at least puts some legal framework and some safeguards in place for indigenous wildlife and bird-life.

My tardy contribution to this is due to the fact I am in the USA at the moment, in the corn-belt, with a community who are active and successful in establishment of prairie grassland facilitating return of the bison-herds and the indigenous flora and fauna of this vast plain.

regards

