

01 March to 31 August*

Why Burning Land During This Period Is Not Clever

It is illegal

Under Section 40 of the Wildlife Act (1976) as amended by Section 46 of the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000, burning land from 01 March to 31 August is illegal. Convictions can and have arisen for such offences. Farmers are at risk of losing farm payments if their land is burned during this period. National Parks and Wildlife Service, An Garda Síochána and Community Groups remain vigilant for burning activity during the summer months.

Burning During Summer is Self-Defeating

Burning gorse in the months of March to August propagates the scrub, meaning burning is in fact facilitating the colonisation of scrub throughout farmland.

There are 6 Other Months in which to Burn

Granted, land is not always dry during the period September to February, but many landowners have always burned land successfully and effectively during the proper period. Burning before March ensures ground is prepared for a full growing season.

Damage to Property

Millions of euro worth of damage is caused to property, including land, outhouses, fencing, forestry, livestock and businesses by land fires that have gone out of control during dry periods. The extra burden of financial loss at the present time is unbearable for many people.

Damage to Wildlife

Each spring and summer, countless numbers of Songbirds, Curlew, Red Grouse, Frogs, Bats, Red Squirrel and Irish Hares are destroyed in fires. As well as being directly burned alive, the effects of burning during the summer time linger for many years in the form of habitat loss. In effect, dead zones are created on the landscape that are devoid of wildlife.

Ruin of the Landscape

Ireland prides itself on having a clean, green image. This is essential in branding for food produce, tourism, healthy pursuits and care towards the environment. The purple heather and bright yellow furze flowers in the height of summer present a much nicer vista than scorched black hills.

Risk to Lives

Apart from the direct risk of fire to human life and homes, land fires put a significant strain on fire-fighting resources, to the extent that often no fire-fighting units are available to attend house fires or road traffic accidents. This endangers lives which might otherwise have been saved.

* - dates as of March 2011



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