



Ballinderry Rivers Trust (BRT) is a charity dedicated to the conservation of the Ballinderry River, Lough Neagh and its western shore rivers and streams, their freshwater species and habitats, their fisheries and the empowerment of the catchment community in the long term protection of the water environment.

Ballinderry Rivers Trust offices are situated on the outskirts of Cookstown and hosts a purpose built river school, which is available for visiting school groups, community and organisations, conferences and meetings, for activities and presentations.



Education

Ballinderry Rivers Trust offers a wide range of environmental education programmes, events and activities designed to educate and inspire children and adults of all ages and abilities to become more aware of local biodiversity conservation, and the protection of local and global habitats and species.

Programmes are available to school groups, covering foundation years, all Key Stages, further and higher education and university level. We offer a wide range of activities which can be tailored to suit the visiting groups' needs. All programmes are delivered by fully qualified and experienced staff. The large scale of the Ballinderry catchment and local areas of interest ensures that all topics of investigation and field work can be catered for.

Hatchery in the Classroom



This project allows the participating schools to have a real insight into the life cycle of fish and how we look after them in our breeding centre. Pupils visit the hatchery during spawning season and see how we gather the fish eggs. The eggs are then moved to the school, just before hatching, where they remain until they are ready for release into the river. The children then look at the freshwater bugs living at the site to assess the amount of food for fish and the water quality before let their young fry go.



Rivers on the Move



The Em2 (Rivers on the Move) is the first of its kind in Ireland. The Rivers on the Move model simulates river processes and allows us to witness how rivers are formed and change over time. The model demonstrates basic principles of river behaviour, subtle channel changes and sediment transport processes. The model is an extremely useful tool for primary schools looking at rivers, bridges and water in the 'World Around Us' topic. It gives pupils the opportunity to manipulate the model and discover the outcomes. As well as this, the model can be used for showing post primary, further and higher education establishments and universities more complex processes and allow them to look at changes in flow rates and gradients and the effects these have on the river channel.

Riverfly Monitoring

Participants are trained how to take kick test samples of invertebrates in the river and collate the data to monitor the water quality at chosen sites. This project can be developed for groups and schools to allow them to adopt a stretch of the river and monitor this for their own information and also for the data to be sent to The Riverfly Partnership and NIEA.



Field Work and Investigations



The Ballinderry is made up of some unique habitats which leaves it an ideal location for groups to come and survey for numerous areas of investigation, including ecological fieldwork on the use of transect lines, quadrats, pooters, pit fall traps, sweep nets etc. and also in river processes, such as velocity, depth/width, bed load, human influence on rivers and

flood management techniques. We also facilitate students for their work placements, placement years and research projects for all levels.



Outreach Programmes are available to schools on a variety of topics including pond dipping, habitats and biodiversity, water, energy, pollution and recycling, freshwater invertebrates, river surveying and water quality. We are an Eco-Schools delivery partner and work with schools to obtain their green flag award.

We also provide outreach programmes to other community groups or for interested parties, these include river restoration, habitat surveying techniques, community engagement techniques, Riverfly partnership and various other environmental topics.

We also run an annual summer scheme and can run events throughout the year to get the wider community involved in our work on the catchment. We run training courses on Riverfly monitoring and these can be delivered throughout NI.

To find out more about any of our programmes or for advice and information on any of our conservation work contact Lisa at Ballinderry Rivers Trust.

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