



"Foreign Correspondent"
Michael Ludwig reports on the some strange goings on in the natural world.

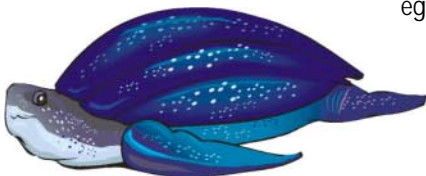


Photo courtesy www.goldeneagle.ie

Donegal Golden Eagle Chick fledges

Great news for the Golden Eagles re-introduced into Glenveagh National Park in Donegal a few years ago. The eagles first nested and laid eggs in Donegal in 2005 and again in 2006 but this year's nest has produced young for the first time. One of the two chicks that hatched in April has now learnt to fly (fledged) and has left the eyrie. As normally happens, the second chick died shortly after hatching. The survivor spent 79 days being fed by both adults during the fledging stage and is likely to be fed by the adults until sometime in October.

Plastic bag kills Leatherback Turtle



During the summer, a large Leatherback Turtle was found dead in the sea off Ballycotton, Co. Cork. Scientists believe that the turtle died from eating a plastic bag, which it mistook for a jellyfish. The turtle was huge - measuring 2.5m from the tip of one flipper to the tip of the other and her shell was 1.68m long. She weighed a tonne. Scientists working on the Irish Sea Leatherback Turtle Project, and who are monitoring turtle activity in Irish waters, have taken samples from the dead leatherback to learn more about her species.

Mermaid's Purse Search in Ireland

A massive nationwide search is underway for Mermaids' Purses, the eggcases of sharks, skates and rays. Irish scientists are hunting for these eggcases because they think that they could provide valuable information on the location of nursery areas for Ireland's skates and rays. If you would like to take part in the hunt, visit their website at www.marinedimensions.ie and read all about it.



Celebrating a 300th birthday!

Carl Linnaeus, the scientist that invented the way we name plants and animals, would have been 300 years old this year (if he had lived that long!). Carl Linnaeus was born in Sweden in 1707 and trained as a medical doctor. But his passion was plants and he dedicated his life to providing structure to the way plants are named, using the Latin language - a language well used in the 1700s. *(We hope to show you the system Linnaeus invented in the next issue.)*

Second chance for Yangtze River dolphin?

The world was shocked to hear that there were no sightings of any of the Yangtze River dolphins during an recent intensive search, with the result that the dolphin was declared extinct. However, there is a little ray of hope as a possible sighting of the dolphin was made soon afterwards by a local man - a sighting that was confirmed by Chinese biologists.

