

All in a Day's Work

Jim Wilson - Irish Wild Life Consultant & Film Maker



PROFILE

For over 30 years Jim Wilson has worked in wild life conservation in Ireland. In recent years he has been filming Irish wild life & promoting our natural heritage through talks, books, newspaper & magazine articles & broadcasting.

A Day in the Life of Jim Wilson

Where do you work?

Wherever there is wild life. When not out filming or talking to school groups I am lucky enough to work from a small office at home, in Cobh, Co. Cork.

Have you always been interested in what you do?

Yes, from a very early age I was interested in wild life and taking photographs and started keeping my first wild life notebook, which I still have, when I was 12 years old.

What training did you do to get where you are today?

All my training has come from over 30 years studying wild life, reading everything I could find relating to wild life, spending a long time learning how to take photographs and then filming wild life and taking part in surveys and wild life projects both here in Ireland and around the world.

What is a day in your life like?

It can vary a lot. I could be trying to film wetland birds from a hide on an estuary or in the garden, in my office on my PC editing what I have filmed or giving wild life talks and working with school groups.

What is your main aim?

My main aim is to get people to love, enjoy and protect Ireland's amazing wild life. I try to do this by telling people about Irish wild life, showing them my wild life images, writing books and magazine articles and other work.

What is the best thing about your job?

Being close to wild life, trying to capture beautiful images on camera and seeing people get enjoyment from wild life.

What is the worst thing about your job?

Seeing how quickly we in Ireland are destroying so much of our wilderness areas... and having to pay the bills!

Do you enjoy your work?

Yes, very much. Everyone should try and get a job they enjoy. I have met too many people who have well paid jobs but hate the work they do.

What equipment do you use?

I mainly use two mini-DV video cameras and a powerful lens for getting close images of wild life.

Where does your work take you?

I have been very lucky. Last December and January I had a job on a cruise liner in the Antarctic. I spent six weeks showing passengers the wild life and giving lectures on the wild life of Antarctica. I have also spent time filming for the Irish Whale and Dolphin Group during their expedition to the Cape Verde Islands off West Africa, that was amazing. I have a special interest in wetland birds and have travelled to Iceland and other parts of Europe filming Black-tailed Godwits. When I am not travelling abroad I get to spend time in some beautiful places here in Ireland, places just as beautiful as the Antarctica or anywhere else.

Do you work alone or as part of a team?

I always work alone when filming but work in small teams when working on other projects.

I have written two books and made an educational DVD with other people and worked very closely with them.

What advice would you give someone wanting to do your job?

Work hard. Always be willing to learn. Get to know your subject really well. Don't be afraid to ask

questions even if you think they might sound silly. Study work by the best in the business such as David Attenborough's wild life programmes and see how they film wildlife and how they put their programmes together.

What would you do if you weren't doing what you do?

Play guitar in a rock and roll band and wash dishes.

What is the best piece of advice you have ever had?

It's never too late to change and Paul Appleby from the BBC telling me a few years ago to buy a Canon XL-1 video camera.



Above: Black Guillemot - midnight, north Iceland.
Right: Shield Bug - Cobh, Co. Cork.



Photos: © Jim Wilson