



The World Around Us

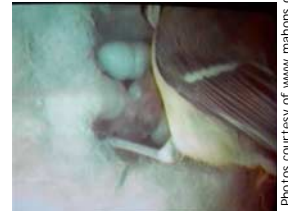
NESTING BIRDS PROVIDE GREAT EXCITEMENT



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

Everyone was really excited listening to Mooney Goes Wild on RTE 1 recently, waiting for the news that five robin chicks, being filmed live on the Mooney Cam 2008, had fledged the nest. The happy event took place on 21st May and to learn more about the lead-up to this event visit the website link on page 10.

Some children on Sherkin were thrilled to have a similar show closer to home, when Barry and Nuala Mahon discovered that a Great Tit had laid six eggs in the bird box in their garden on the island. They were able to feed a video link from their bird box to their television and view the show from the comfort of their own home. All six hatched and the young great tit chicks are on the verge of fledging the nest and should be on their way any day.



Above: The Great Tit tending her hatching chicks.
Top: Nuala & Barry's bird box.

Photos courtesy of www.mahons.org

HURRICANE SEASON IN THE ATLANTIC

The 2008 Atlantic hurricane season is just beginning. It officially starts on 1st June and goes right through until 30th November. Forecasters are expecting that 6 to 9 storms will turn into hurricanes of varying strength. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Climate Prediction Center says that an average Atlantic hurricane season would bring 11 tropical storms, of which six reach hurricane wind speed of 74 mph (119 kph). Scientists can choose from a list of 21 names provided for the 2008 season.



DUBLIN ZOO'S GREY WOLF PACK DOUBLES IN SIZE

Exciting things are happening at Dublin Zoo and one of these is the doubling in size of the pack of grey wolves at the zoo, making it one of the largest groups in Europe! Four females and two males recently arrived from Longleat in the UK to join the resident group of five. The wolves have settled in well and their arrival gives the public a rare opportunity to see a large group of wolves together in one place.

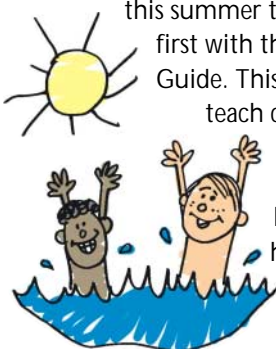
Photos courtesy of William Campbell, USFWS



Grey Wolf

A MESSAGE ABOUT WATER SAFETY

Irish Water Safety would like everyone who is looking forward to swimming at Ireland's waterways and abroad this summer to update their safety knowledge first with the new "14 Steps to Safe Swimming" Guide. This important guide is designed to teach children and adults important water safety messages, helping to keep them safe in and near the water. The leaflet will be available at lifeguard huts nationwide but can also be downloaded from www.iws.ie.



SPACECRAFT LANDS ON MARS' NORTH POLE

For the first time (that we know of!!!) a space craft has landed on Mars' North Pole. NASA's Phoenix Lander will spend three months testing the site where it landed, particularly for signs of frozen water. The spacecraft was launched on 4th August 2007 and took 296 days to cover the 422-million-mile flight from Earth to Mars. The planet is so far away, it takes 15 minutes for messages from the spacecraft to reach earth!

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