



The World Around Us



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

A Happy Ending to a Dog's Tale

In early April, Irish Rail had an unexpected passenger on their 08:46am train from Sallins, Co Kildare, to Heuston Station in Dublin. An unaccompanied terrier pup boarded the train to make the 30 minute journey to the city. On being discovered, it was taken care of by Ted Maher, an employee of Irish Rail, who looked after it until its owners were tracked down.

The dog was temporarily named 'Hamish' but it was discovered to be 'Tyson', when its owners were eventually found following a social media appeal. Before they could claim the dog, they provided photographic evidence to prove they were the owners. Ted Maher is a volunteer at the "My Lovely Horse" animal rescue centre and before Tyson was returned to its owners, the centre microchipped the dog so that if he went missing again, he could be traced. A happy ending for a daring traveller.



Stunning Aerial Footage from WhaleTrack Ireland

The Irish Whale and Dolphin Group (IWDG) recently began an exciting new project called WhaleTrack Ireland. Their aim is to find out what large baleen whales are doing in Irish waters, where are they coming from and going to. On Saturday 20th April 2019, WhaleTrack Ireland went in search of humpback whales from Reen Pier near Union Hall, West Cork. On board a Cork Whale Watch boat, they headed out to where they had heard whales had been seen in the area that week. Though there was a thick haze on the sea, they collected the first set of aerial images and video of up to six humpback whales feeding and socialising, as well as common dolphins bow riding the whales. The IWDG encourages help from the general public, so if you see any sightings of whales, please let them know www.iwdg.ie



Plastic in the Remotest Part of the World



The Mariana Trench, in the Pacific Ocean, is the deepest place on Earth and plastic has even made its way to the bottom of it.

A retired naval officer, Victor Vescovo, who recently made the deepest manned dive ever—descending to nearly 11km—spent four hours surveying the bottom of the trench. As well as sea creatures, sadly he also discovered a plastic bag and sweet wrappers! Further proof that controlling plastic litter is vital to a healthy planet!



... and Speaking of Whales

Palaeontologists (people who study fossils) have found the fossil of a 43 million year old whale in Peru. Along with a four metre body and a powerful tail, the whale also had four limbs which could have been able to carry its weight. They believe that it was adapted to swim and to walk on land.

Four-legged whale fossils have been found before, but this is the largest to be found outside of India and Pakistan. It is believed the first whales evolved in South Asia around 50 million years ago.

Bees Survive the Fire at Notre Dame

Following the dreadful fire that destroyed most of the roof on Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris, people were surprised to learn that the bees in nearby beehives on the cathedral's roof, did not abandon their hives and survived, despite being covered in smoke from the fire. There have been bee hives on the cathedral since 2013, due to efforts to increase bee populations in the city. Beekeepers often use smoke to calm the bees and the cathedral's beekeeper think the smoke from the fire made them 'drunk' on honey and put them to sleep.

