

# Editor's Page

## Goodness, Gracious, Great Balls of Fish!

You don't always have to be out in a boat or take up diving to see interesting fish behaviour. My sister-in-law Jackie was walking along the pier in Baltimore, West Cork, at the beginning of December, when she saw this 'bait ball' of fish circling near the pier. The fish had been chased in shore by a cormorant, which was obviously looking for its lunch. When hunted by predators, such as birds, whales, dolphins and larger fish, small fish have very few places to hide in the open sea. One type of



Courtesy of Jackie Murphy

defence they have against these predators is to form into a tight circle called a 'bait ball'. On their own, the fish are more likely to be eaten, but when in this group it is hard for a predator to focus on a single fish.

As GAELIGE! We are delighted to have teamed up with An Gúm, who are translating Nature's Web into Irish. Issues are now available, as gaeilge, at:  
[http://www.gaeilge.ie/ForasnaGaeilge/An\\_Bhunscoil.asp](http://www.gaeilge.ie/ForasnaGaeilge/An_Bhunscoil.asp)



Photo: © Bord Bia - Irish Food Board

### Pan-fried Hake with Lemon & Herb Butter Sauce

#### To Cook

- Heat the olive oil in a large frying pan and add the seasoned hake fillets, skin side down. Cook for a couple of minutes until the skin is just beginning to crisp, then add little knobs of butter to the pan around each hake fillet and cook for another couple of minutes until the skin is crisp.
- Turn the hake fillets over and cook for another 3-4 minutes until cooked through. This will depend on the thickness of the fillets. Transfer to warmed plates while you make the sauce.
- Add the rest of the butter to the frying pan and allow it to gently melt over a moderate heat. When it has melted, add a squeeze of lemon juice and the herbs, swirling to combine. Season to taste. Spoon this sauce over the hake fillets and serve with steamed broccoli and some sautéed new potatoes.

Other fish you could use: Whiting, haddock or trout

Courtesy of Bord Bia - Irish Food Board [www.bordbia.ie](http://www.bordbia.ie).

#### Ingredients

- 4 x 175g hake fillets, skin on & boned
- 1 tablesp. olive oil
- Salt and freshly ground pepper
- 50g butter
- ½ lemon, pips removed
- 1 tablesp. chopped mixed herbs

Tips: Above all be careful not to overcook the fish. To check, gently prod the thickest part of the fish with a small knife. If it is cooked, the flesh will look opaque and the flakes will separate easily. If it isn't done yet, it will still have the translucent look of raw fish.

Welcome to the  
Winter Edition of  
Nature's Web!

Dear Reader,



Welcome to the winter 2014 issue of Nature's Web. In this issue, we meet with Mervyn Horgan of the Lifetime Lab @ Old Cork Waterworks in Cork City and learn about his working day and what you can do at the Lifetime Lab. With the help of Captain Cockle, we find out about the most dangerous animals in the ocean, which may be surprising to some!. With the festive season approaching, we learn more about a relative of the reindeer, the moose and also moss, a plant that helps to make Ireland green.

You can check out nature news from around the world on page 11 and enjoy a giggle with the jokes on page 13.

We would love to hear your views, comments and suggestions for future articles. Have a good read!

Susan

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