

**What is Biodiversity?**

Biodiversity, or "Biological Diversity", refers to the sum total interdependent web of life, from bacteria, microscopic algae, fungi, through to plants, trees, amphibians, fish, birds and mammals – and people!!! If we achieve "best-practice" we can greatly assist our community's capacity for Biodiversity.

# HOME TRUTHS

The StreamScapes method views our toilets, sinks, baths and showers as Tributaries to our Rivers! What we put in them has a huge capacity to impact on local Water Quality and Biodiversity. Outside our homes in our gardens and yards we have an equal ability to create or destroy natural habitats. These tips will help restore water quality & biodiversity:

## Household Best Practice

- Avoid any Cleaning Products with Phosphates or Bleach – they spoil the good work of your sewage treatment plant / septic tank, leading to aquatic pollution – use "eco-friendly" products!
- Use the minimum of any cleaning product – enough is enough!
- Do not use in-sink food macerators (they put added strain on sewage treatment) – compost your vegetable wastes and use as fertiliser in your garden!
- Any common household product labelled Hazard or Poison or Irritant must be treated as toxic waste when disposing of – follow Local Authority guidelines and do not put in drains!!!
- Keep your garden low-maintenance and low water-dependent, but covered in established sod (and not hard-surfaced) to avoid contributing to peak urban rainfall run-off. Use native plants and trees to establish suitable local habitats.
- Avoid herbicides, pesticides, and application of fertilisers – find natural ways to garden.
- Remember that disturbed ground contributes silt to local water courses – silts are a major enemy of aquatic biodiversity.
- Finally, control your use of water at home and in the garden...treat it as the precious substance that it is!

## Don't let Nature go down the Drain!

This StreamScapes project is supported by Monaghan County Council and the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government. The project aims to promote awareness and community engagement in maintaining healthy waters and supports a new approach to catchment management.

**Produced by the StreamScapes Project**  
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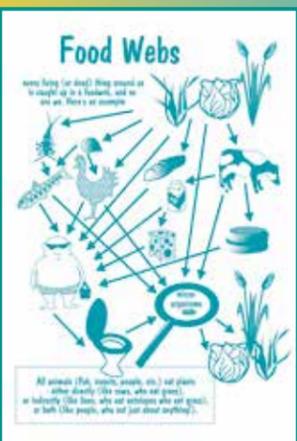
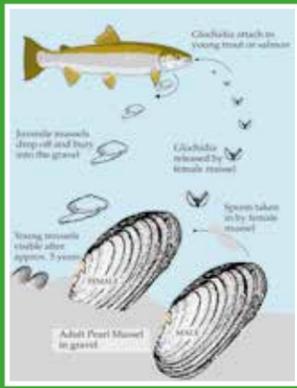
**Instream Insects**

Did you know that a survey or census of the bugs that live in your local river reveal the environmental quality of the water? Stone flies, mayflies, and cased caddis fly larvae are amongst the most pollution-sensitive aquatic bugs...if you find them in your river it is a good sign! And another good example of Biodiversity in action.



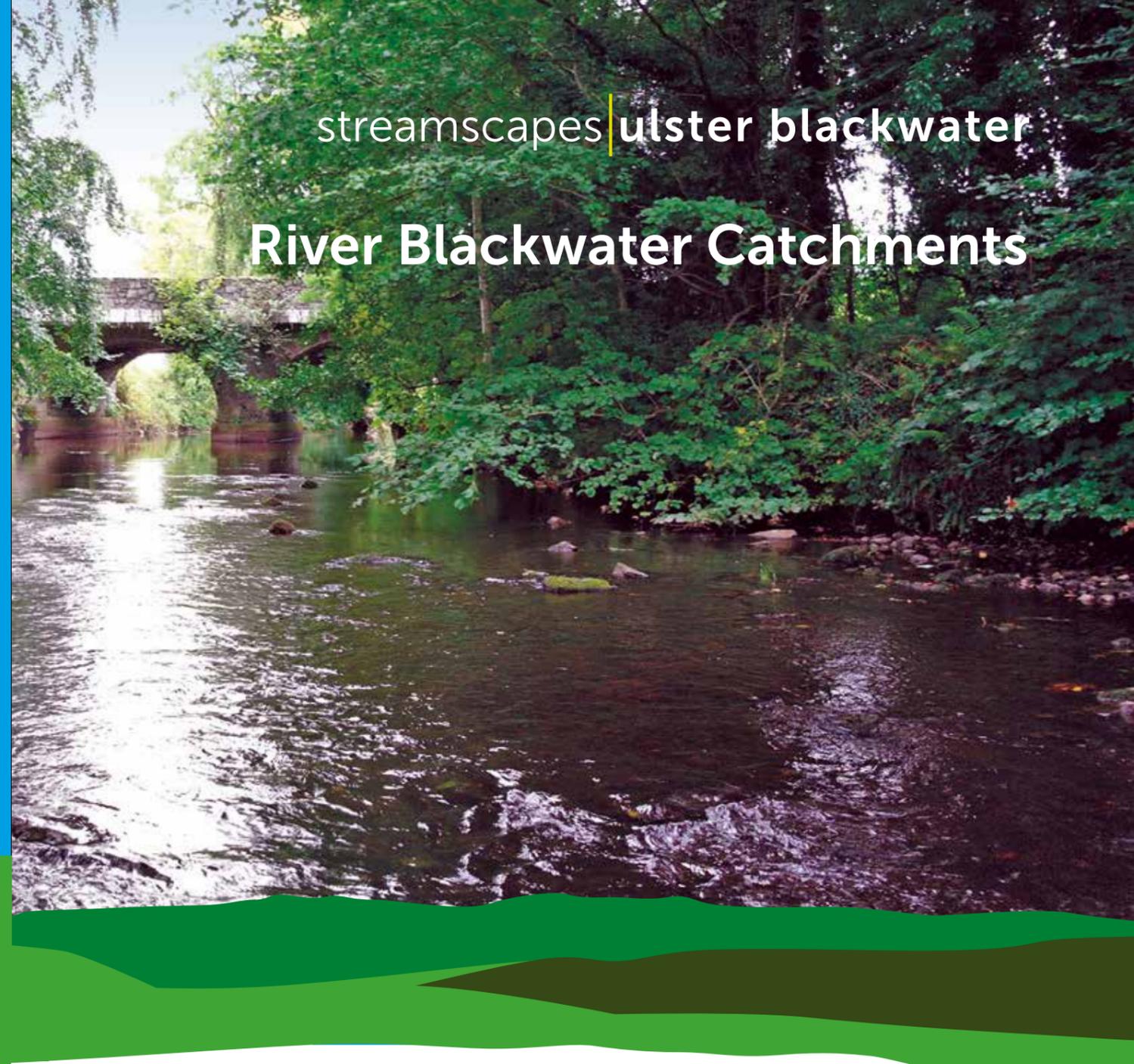
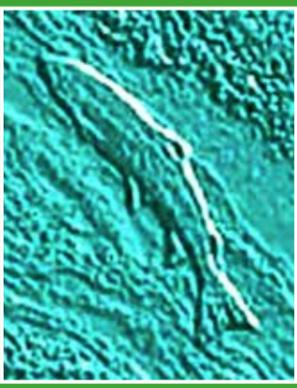
**Freshwater Mussels**

The study of Biodiversity is full of wondrous stories... the Freshwater Pearl Mussel (FPM), which used to live in most of Ireland's rivers but is now considered extremely threatened, is the longest lived species, living over 100 years. The microscopic juveniles spend a winter attached to a trout's gill... this is how they migrate. They are very sensitive to nutrient & silt pollution.



**Salmon**

The status of Salmon in local rivers is a great indicator of local environmental quality. When they are present, they are proof that multiple terrestrial, instream, and marine habitats are in balance. This is because salmon depend upon an entire suite of other, similarly sensitive organisms to thrive...Biodiversity!



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**River Blackwater Catchments**

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Comhshool, Pobal agus Rialtas Áitiúil  
 Environment, Community and Local Government



# River Blackwater Catchment: Waters & Wildlife

We all live in the River Blackwater Catchment, which consists of all of the valleys which contribute streams to the River. A Catchment is a community related by water, and we are all dependent upon each other to secure high-quality Waters & Wildlife!

Why are we interested in the **Bugs** that live in the River Blackwater and its catchment? Because they can show what the local Water Quality is. If you have participated in the StreamScapes Ulster Blackwater Project you have learned that Water Quality may be placed on a "Q" Scale of Q1 to Q5, with Q1 being poor water quality and Q5 being very good water quality. Here are some **Bug** samples and what Water Quality they indicate:

If we can achieve high-quality waters in the River Blackwater Catchment, lots of benefits follow, including:

- Our health is better
- Our rates and taxes are lower, and...
- We will have an abundance of wildlife!
- Our community's businesses and farms thrive!

**How many of the following Species have you seen?**

