

rapidly flying away while a pair of wary Grey hooded crows keep a watch on my every move. Meadow pipits need long grass to nest in and many of the surrounding agricultural fields are cut too short and too frequently to suit their nesting requirements. The grass here is only grazed by horses and this is the perfect environment for the Meadow pipits. One of them is very agitated and keeps up a constant alarm call from the Esp wire. Its nest must be nearby by so I don't venture too far from the riverbank.

The tall white flowers of Angelica thrive in damp locations like the edges of rivers. If you look at the flowers you will see that they are covered in insects and this is one flower that I would recommend for any gardener or community green space. Thick islands of bramble dot the landscape and these are always worth examining as they are often full of interesting wildlife. This one does not disappoint, as I discover a large white butterfly, Meadow brown butterfly, Common wasp, Green bottle fly and an Apple garden spider that looks like the apple



This Lavender plant is beneficial for the local bee population



Cinnabar caterpillars and Ragwort living side by side

fruit. A long legged Harvestman spider nimbly sprints over the thorns and disappears into cover. Nearby a Robin and Wren are singing and Roboos are flying over to join the Starlings in the recently cut field.



These wild flowers are excellent a food source for butterflies

Tall Reeds that sway musically in the breeze line the bank. They are excellent cover for the Greenfinches, Chaffinches and Linnets that I disturbed from their feeding stations on the thistles. They fly nosily

when the river used to freeze and locals would come and skate. With a wave of his hand he explains that all of this land can flood but there is plenty of wildlife around and his two companions enjoy the freedom of running through the grass. I push on with Swallows flying over my head. They are feasting on insects and fattening up for their long journey back to Africa. Bush vetch is scrambling up through the grasses and this is a magnet for bees.

Grasshoppers are in full song as each male tries to entice a female. These insects fascinate me but they are very hard to catch. Their song carries so you can often be searching in the wrong place.

After a few minutes I manage to catch one and it turns out to be a Common Green Grasshopper. They can jump up to a metre and we know very little about the distribution of these creatures. A slight rustling in the grass catches my attention and when I look closely I find a tiny frog. After they leave their maternity pool they head for areas with long grass. This keeps their bodies moist but also offers

but their larval stage is the soil. Every step I take throws up grass moths and they can be abundant in grasslands-like this.

The biggest surprise is a Peacock butterfly. On its wings it has four false eyes. When a predator approaches it flashes these eyes, the bird stops for a few seconds and the butterfly can make it escape. On my way back to the car I can hear a Pheasant calling. This is normally a farmland bird but this one has taken up city living.

This is a unique place and would make a wonderful nature park for people of Limerick. Local schools could visit and learn about wildlife, university students could carry out research and studies as part of their courses and with a few simple paths it would be ideal for families and serious walkers. Now more than ever we need green spaces and along by the banks of the Groody River a nature park would be wise investment for generations to come.

Comments/Questions to
albert.nolan@rocketmail.com
or 089 4230502.

New book on chief justice Hugh Kennedy

EUGENE PHELAN

FORMER Mayor of Limerick Pat Kennedy has just published a book entitled *Hugh Kennedy: The Great But Neglected Chief Justice*.

Mr Kennedy, a former teacher at CBS who became a barrister, says the book explores the constitutional, legal and political strategies that firmly laid the foundation of the Irish Free State.

He was surprised that no

one had documented the life of Hugh Kennedy, the first attorney general of the Irish Free State in 1922. The book has been fully endorsed by the Irish Law Society and the Bar Council of Ireland.

"I wrote the book, nobody had done it before. Ronan Keane had done a short account but no one had written a book - he was one of the most significant figures in the history of the time, and much underestimated," said Mr Kennedy, who is also a former

president of Limerick Chamber of Commerce.

Hugh Kennedy was well known for wearing his wig in his hand and not in his head. Although he was not involved in the physical force movement at the time, his sympathies were nationalist and he became legal adviser to the Department of Local Government under the first Dail.

The author, who has many strings to his bow, including having an advanced diploma in

genealogy, was also a member of the Senad for 12 years.

He revealed that he is working on a number of other projects including a volume on Irish barristers who were killed in World War 1.

He feels it is only right to recognise Hugh Kennedy, who was top legal adviser to the Irish delegation at the Anglo Irish Treaty negotiations in 1921. The book is on sale in O'Mahony's, the Hunt Museum and at Quays books, Arthur's Quay.



Pat Kennedy has penned a book on legal titan Hugh Kennedy

Mary Conroy during the W September 1

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