

Pollen power: The investigation of past ecology and why the past matters

Maynooth University Department of Geography invites you to attend a seminar presented by:

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Maynooth University

Date: November 30th

Time: 4.00pm to 5.30pm

Location: Rocque Lab, Rhetoric House



Pollen is beautiful and very durable. It can resist decay in peat bogs and lake sediments for thousands of years. Subsamples from peat cores contain many microfossils, including pollen. By examining the micro-contents of these “muddy time machines” palaeoecologists can narrate histories of past ecological change.

This seminar will present and discuss some of the results of my research, especially in application to questions of land management and rewilding. I will show palaeoecological evidence that may challenge both the concept of dense pine forest in the wilder former landscapes of Glen Affric in Scotland; and, also, the role and form of traditional land management in the maintenance of biodiversity and social-ecological resilience in the uplands. What does this mean for links with land management policy and future planning?

I will be critical of the tools of paleoecology and illustrate some of the statistical methods that we, as a palaeoecological community, have been working on to gain more accurate, quantified landscape reconstructions. I will also briefly discuss the role of big data in palaeoecology. The linking of many datasets to produce land cover maps of the past for use in validating climate change models is particularly important.

Department of Geography Seminar Series

All are welcome

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