



Monday 13 May, 2019

Two men found guilty and convicted under Wildlife Act

- **Department's National Parks and Wildlife Service take case against the men**
- **They were convicted of offences relating to the destruction of vegetation growing in a hedge during the bird nesting season and the wilful destruction of birds' nests under Section 40 of the Wildlife Acts**

In a case taken by the National Parks & Wildlife Service – under the remit of the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht – on 2 May 2019, two men were convicted of four offences under the Wildlife Acts.

The offences included the wilful destruction of birds' nests and the destruction of vegetation growing in a hedge on dates between 22 and 27 May 2017 at Clogrenan, County Laois.

Conservation Ranger, Kieran Buckley, of the National Parks and Wildlife Service presented evidence at Carlow District Court which showed that 1 mile of hedgerow vegetation containing the nests of 4 bird species, including Blackbird, Song Thrush, Wren and Wood Pigeon had been destroyed.

The two defendants stated that they did not know that there were bird nests in the hedgerow or that it was an offence to destroy vegetation growing in a hedge during the bird nesting season.

The defendants' case was that it was a defence to remove hedgerow vegetation in the ordinary course of agriculture.

However, the Judge did not agree with this assertion and remarked that the evidence presented to the court showed that the destruction of vegetation was very significant and outside of the ordinary course agriculture because it was carried out on an extraordinary scale.

Judge Daly added that the damage also had significant implications for the protection of birds and the wider environment. Judge Daly convicted and fined the first defendant €750 on two counts and stated that he as the landowner had the greater culpability. He convicted the second defendant on two counts and fined him €500. The Judge added that ignorance of the law was no excuse to break it.

ENDS

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