

Introduction

- Surveyed biodiversity across three spatially distinct university sports campuses in Dublin.
- Recorded plant, fungal and animal taxa across a range of habitats.
- Assessed existing biodiversity measures and opportunities for further enhancement.

The three sites



Islandbridge Boat House



Iveagh Sports Grounds

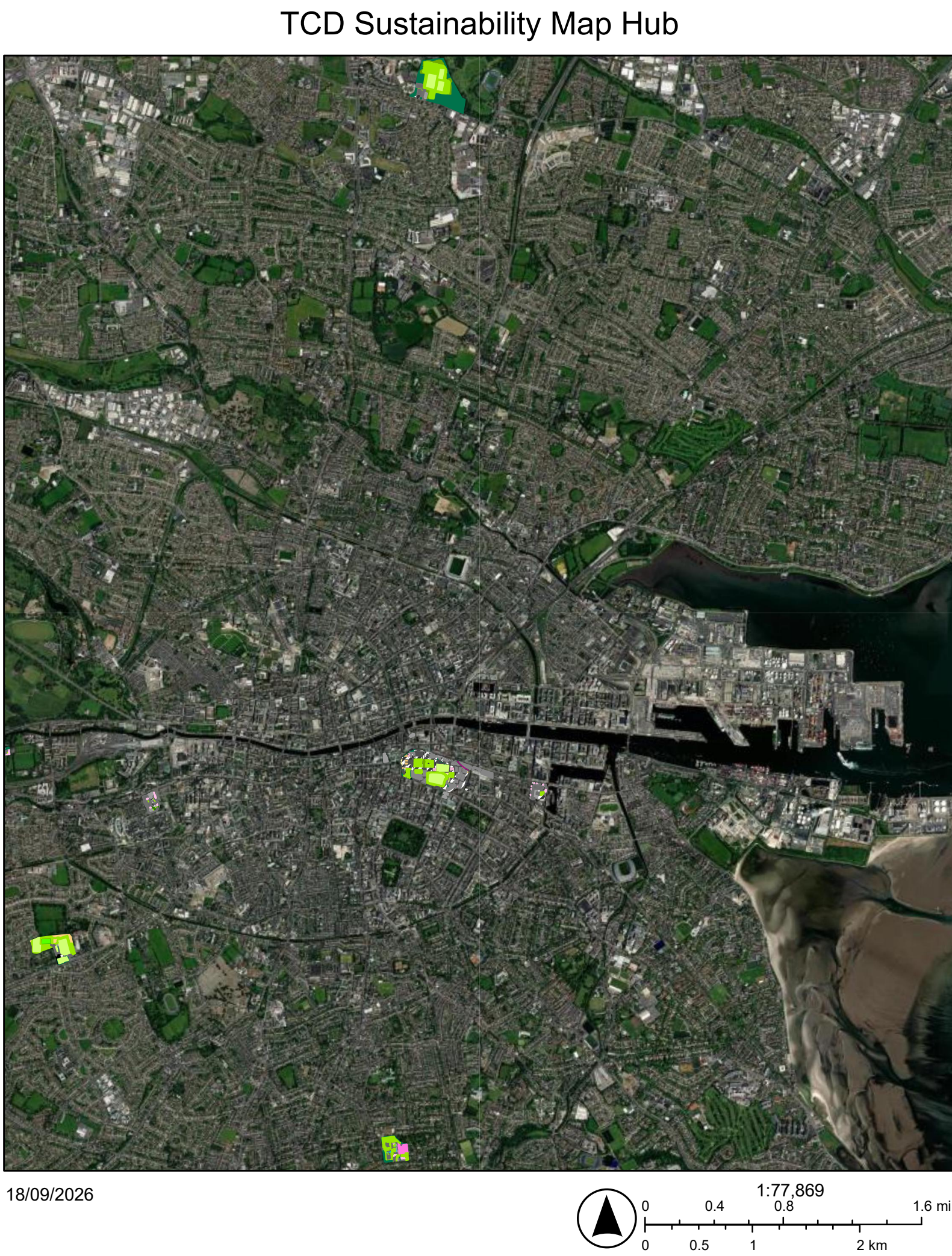


Santry Sports Grounds

Habitat mapping conducted using ArcGIS Online

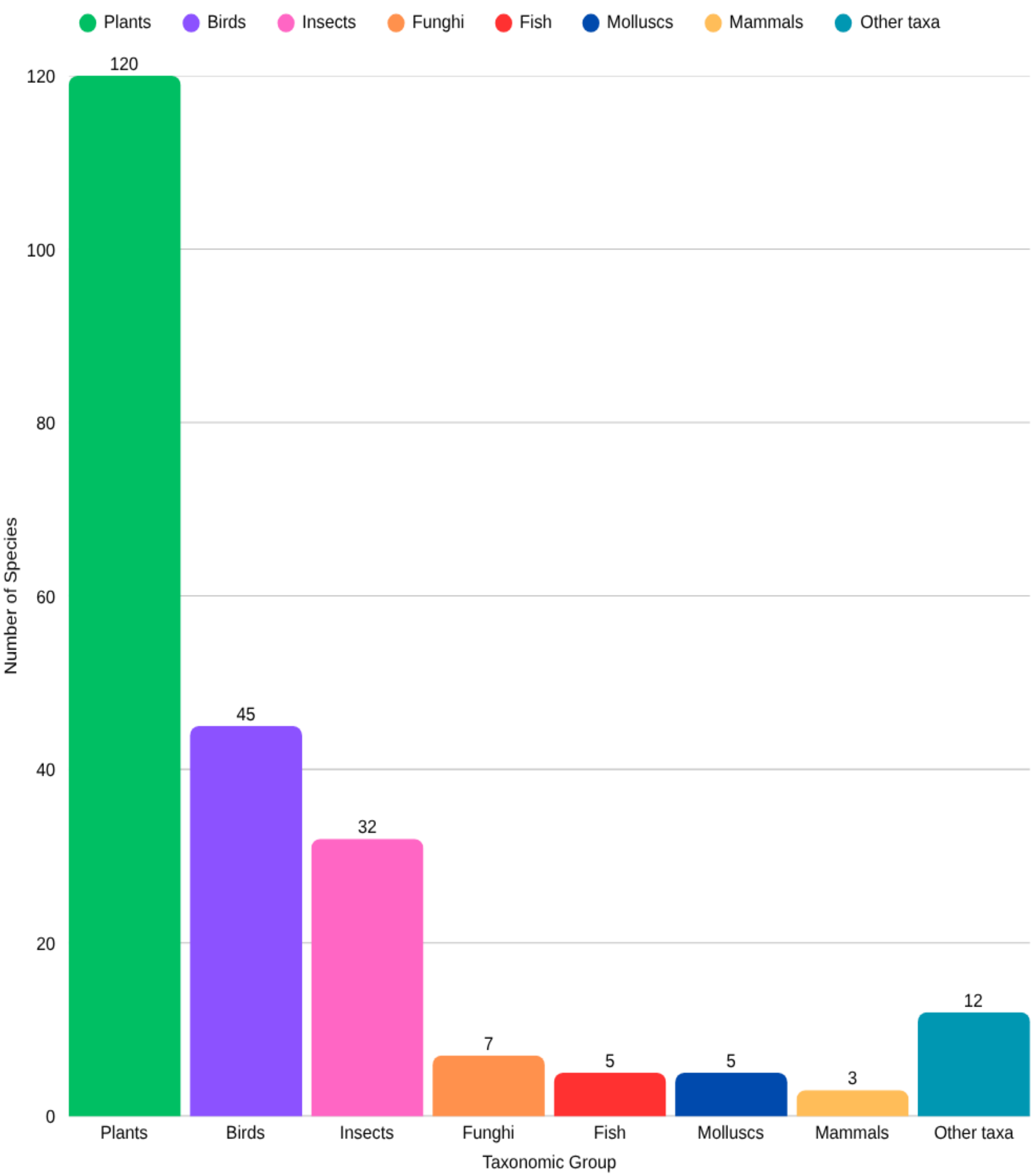
Habitat and Land Use Legend		
(Islandbridge Boathouse, Iveagh Grounds & Santry Sports Grounds 2025)		
 Mown Grass	 Wild Meadows	 Flat Rooves
 Grass Pitches	 Treelines	 Pitched Rooves
 Artificial Turf Pitch	 Ornamental Planting	 Construction/Maintenance Site
 Less-managed Grass	 Paved Surfaces	

Location of study sites across Dublin



Results

229 unique taxa recorded across the three sites



Existing measures include ‘No Mow May’, the strategic use of deadwood and low intensity grassland management.



Common Frog (*Rana temporaria*) and Banded Demoiselle (*Calopteryx splendens*) recorded during field surveys

Aims & Objectives

- Establish comprehensive species lists for each sports ground.
- Assess existing strategies supporting native biodiversity.
- Survey species across the different habitats present.
- Develop practical recommendations for future biodiversity enhancement.
- Improve personal taxonomic knowledge through fieldwork and workshops.

Methodology

- Conducted **nine surveys** across all three sports grounds using iNaturalist and Merlin Bird ID.
- Surveyed the different habitat types present at each site.
- Completed **50 m × 10 m transects** with three 50 m lengths walked over 15 minutes at approximately 10 m/min.
- Used a **50 cm × 50 cm quadrat**, sampled ten times within each habitat.
- Surveyed rocks and deadwood for cryptic fauna occupying sheltered microhabitats.

Recommendations

- **Create fish-free ponds** to increase habitat complexity and provide habitat for amphibians and aquatic invertebrates.
- **Expand deadwood habitats** across suitable areas.
- **Establish short wildflower meadows**, cut approximately every 4 to 6 weeks.
- **Manage invasive species**, including New Zealand Cabbage Tree and Three Cornered Leek.
- **Reduce management intensity** where compatible with sporting use.

Conclusion

- Strong institutional support exists for further biodiversity enhancement.
- **229 unique taxa** were recorded across the three sports grounds.
- Substantially more taxa were recorded than in the 2021 Trinity Biodiversity Audit.
- Existing measures such as deadwood retention and low-intensity grassland management are supporting biodiversity.
- Greater habitat diversity, particularly **wetlands and less intensively managed areas**, would provide further benefits.
- Wilder, biodiverse areas can enhance sports grounds by supporting **both nature and the health and wellbeing of club members**.