

A scenic view of a river flowing over large, dark rocks, surrounded by lush green vegetation and trees. The water is turbulent as it cascades over the rocks, creating white foam. The surrounding landscape is dense with green foliage, including grasses and small yellow flowers. The river flows from the background towards the foreground, where the rocks are more prominent.

As the gradient of the hills eases, the streams gradually lose their velocity and begin to gently meander, creating distinct instream habitats. Salmon and trout spawn in shallow, fast-flowing riffles and their young hatch and feed in the gravel. Herons stand by the water's edge still as statues, poised to strike out for fish and eels. Year-old salmon and trout find homes in slower-flowing glides, hiding in bubble curtains and feeding opportunistically on whatever the flow brings along. Dippers dive into the glide and scurry along the river bottom, feeding on aquatic invertebrates. Fallen branches collect in deeper, slower-flowing pools, providing habitat for aquatic insects and fish.

- EU Water Framework Directive in Ireland: www.wfdireland.ie
- The Heritage Council's biodiversity watch: www.biology.ie
- Aquatic education resources from Coomhola Salmon Trust: www.streamscapes.ie
- Sustainable Water Network: www.swanireland.ie
- Environmental Protection Agency: www.epa.ie
- National Parks & Wildlife Service: www.npws.ie