IAH Karst Course 2013 and 2014

In May 2013, the International Association of Hydrogeologists (IAH), Irish Group funded a 2 day course in the Burren on the fundamentals of karst, led by David Drew and Caoimhe Hickey.

Lectures on Day 1 were given by David Drew and started with an Introduction to karst and karst landforms, fracture patterns in Irish limestones by John Paul Moore of UCD and karst hydrogeology with David Drew.

Course participants split in half for the proictical element which was split across the two day course. Field visits were made to see subsurface karst landforms and hydrology at Polldubh Cave, and to see surface karst landforms including enclosed depressions (both large and small), turloughs, springs, limestone pavements and swallow holes. The course included a practical element with participants calculating the volume of water sinking at a swallow hole using a current meter and conducting a dye tracing experiment consisting of both injection of the dye and recovering it at a spring.

Day 2 presentations focused on the methods used to investigate karst, a presentation on karst landform mapping and dye tracing techniques, modelling in karst and geophysical techniques in karst, drilling and developing water resources in karst and the challenges that karst environments pose.

The group then split back into the two field groups with each group participating in the field excursion that they had not done the day before.

Due to demand, the course was run again the following year, in 2014. The feedback from the participants was very positive and participants said they gained practical and useful knowledge. It is hoped that this course will be run again in the near future. If you are interested in doing this course please contact either David Drew (ddrew@tcd.ie) or Caoimhe Hickey (Caoimhe.Hickey@gsi.ie).

Caoimhe Hickey, Geological Survey of Ireland.

Participants learning about the hydrogeological control of the vein patterns in the limestones of County Clare

Karst course participants measuring stream flow with current meters.