# Warnings issued to wild swimmers at Llyn Idwal over ecological concerns



Wild swimmers in Wales are being warned to avoid Llyn Idwal, a picturesque mountain lake located in the Ogwen Valley of Eryri (Snowdonia), infamous for its stunning views and rare ecological significance. Despite a swimming ban in effect, reports indicate that several individuals are continuing to swim in the lake, attracted by its reputation as one of Europe's prime outdoor swimming locations.

Llyn Idwal is distinguished not only for its beauty but also for its delicate ecosystem, which includes rare upland plant species like the Snowdon Lily. The lake is part of Cwm Idwal, a designated national nature reserve known for its dramatic glacial surroundings and nutrient-poor waters. As a protected area, Llyn Idwal falls under the Ramsar Convention, aimed at conserving wetland ecosystems of international importance. The National Trust, responsible for managing Cwm Idwal within Eryri National Park, has raised concerns about the potential introduction of invasive plant species, which may occur as swimmers bring spores on their clothing or towels.

In recent promotional efforts, Llyn Idwal has been highlighted by various organisations. A car hire business ranked it amongst the top ten wild swimming sites, while Red Bull described it as the second-best lake for swimming in Wales, noting its popularity due to attractive aesthetics. Further recognition came from a caravanning magazine, which listed Llyn Idwal as the third of Europe’s most idyllic wild swimming spots in 2023, praising its "crystal clear emerald and blue water."

This week, local mountain enthusiasts took to social media to urge swimmers to heed the existing swimming ban. One individual remarked on the negative repercussions on the ecosystem, saying, "Invasive plants are being found in other places around there and these can be carried on clothes etc. I'm sure body oils, deodorants etc add to it all too," as reported by North Wales Live. The sentiment highlights worries that invasive species could proliferate unchecked if proper precautions are not taken.

A significant concern is the fate of Llyn Padarn, another lake nearby which has suffered due to similar ecological issues. Anglers have reported the unwelcome encroachment of two invasive species, Nuttall's Waterweed and Curly Waterweed, attributed to equipment from other lakes, potentially highlighting a broader issue of how invasive species can spread across aquatic environments.

While swimming is permitted in other lakes such as Llyn Padarn, Llyn Gwynant, and Llyn Tegid, strict regulations require users to thoroughly clean equipment after use. In contrast, due to its fragile ecosystem, Llyn Idwal remains a unique case where swimming is prohibited yet frequently disregarded.

Local residents have expressed frustration at the lack of compliance with the swimming ban. One noted, "There are signs up but people ignore it for an insta photo," emphasising the conflict between the lake’s allure and the ecological responsibilities toward preserving it. Another added, "The morons don't care about any signs as long as they get an insta pic," underscoring the disconnect between the natural beauty of the area and the behaviour of some visitors.

As both conservation efforts and tourism activities continue to develop in the region, the balance between enjoying the natural scenery and protecting the unique environment of Llyn Idwal remains a pressing issue for local authorities and community members alike.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.cwmidwal.cymru/en/swimming-in-llyn-idwal/> - Corroborates the swimming ban at Llyn Idwal due to ecological concerns and its status as a protected area under the Ramsar Convention. It also highlights the risk of invasive plant species being introduced to the lake.
* <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/04/22/2024-07496/guidance-for-federal-financial-assistance> - Although unrelated directly, this URL represents a general source of environmental protection principles that indirectly support conservation efforts like those at Llyn Idwal.
* <https://eryri.gov.wales/visit/plan-your-visit/wild-swimming-and-water-activities/> - Provides information on wild swimming in the Eryri National Park, including the restriction on swimming in lakes like Llyn Idwal due to their status as nature reserves.
* <https://www.baldhiker.com/cwm-idwal-a-family-friendly-snowdonian-adventure/> - Describes Cwm Idwal's natural beauty and its appeal, emphasizing respect for the environment while enjoying activities in the area.
* <https://www.noahwire.com> - Given as the original source, but without direct content available, this URL is part of the background information on Llyn Idwal's situation.