



Tree Species Information

Native Irish Trees: Arrived here by themselves after the end of the last Ice age (10 - 12,000 years ago)

Geailge	Béarla	Layer in the Woods	Deciduous or Evergreen	Max. Height/Lifespan	Uses/Interesting Fact
Fearnóg	Alder	Canopy	Deciduous	40-80m/80-100 years	Called Irish Mahogany. Its yellow roots are covered with balls of nitrogen fixing bacteria
Caithne	Arbutus	Understory/Shrub	Evergreen	5-15m/50-150 years	Pollinated by bees. Makes a good fuel wood
Fuinseóg	Ash	Canopy	Deciduous	35-40m /100-200 years	Can be coppiced to make fences and hurls
Beith	Birch	Canopy	Deciduous	20 -25m/120-140 years	Downy and Silver species grow here
Draighean	Blackthorn	Understory/Shrub	Deciduous	6m/100+	Can grow as bush or tree – makes a good hedge, like Hawthorn
Donnoisc	Cherry - Bird	Understory/Shrub	Deciduous	10-15m/70+ years	Home to the Bird Cherry Ermine Moth



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Crann Silín Fiáin/Gean	Cherry - Wild	Understory/Shrub	Deciduous	4-6m/70+ years	Used in furniture making with a lovely grain
Crann Fia-úll	Crab Apple	Understory/Shrub	Deciduous	15m/60+ years	The original wild apple, sour to taste and used to set jams/jellies (pectin)
Tromán	Elder	Understory/Shrub	Deciduous	15m/60+ years	Used to make furniture
Leamhán Sléibhe	Elm - Wych	Canopy	Deciduous	14-18m/100= years	More resistant to Dutch Elm disease
Caorchon	Guelder Rose	Understory/Shrub	Deciduous	4-5m/	Not a rose but a beautiful shrub that produces edible berries
Sceach Gheal	Hawthorn	Understory/Shrub	Deciduous	6-15m/300-400+ years	Makes really good firewood and charcoal. Poultice of leaves/flowers extracts splinters
Coll	Hazel	Understory/Shrub	Deciduous	3-12m/80-400+ years if coppiced	Important food source. Flexible wood. Suitable for coppicing. Old woods were often working coppices
Cuilleann	Holly	Understory/Shrub	Evergreen	3-15m/100+ years	Host plant to the Holly Blue Butterfly



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Dair	Oak	Canopy	Deciduous	30-40m/500-700+ years	2 species – Irish and English Oaks – can you tell the difference?
Caorthann	Rowan	Understory/Shrub	Deciduous	15m/120-200+ years	Also called the Mountain Ash – why does it have this nickname?
Péine Albanach	Scots Pine	Canopy	Evergreen	35m/500-700+ years	Known as a pioneer tree, can live in a hostile environment, making it more hospitable for other plants to grow
Feoras	Spindle	Understory/Shrub	Deciduous	6m/100+ years	Likes limestone soil. Unusual fruit and seeds. Was used to make spinning wheels and looms
Fionncholl	Whitebeam	Understory/Shrub	Deciduous	12m	Related to the Rowan
Iúr	Yew	Canopy	Evergreen	20-25m/400-600+ years	Celts saw this tree as a gateway to the underworld and immortality
Saileach	Willow	Canopy/Understory	Deciduous	Varies	Good tree to coppice. Many species. Used to make baskets and living structures



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Some native shrubs that provide an important understory in the forest:

Geailge	Béarla	Layer in the Woods	Uses/Interesting Fact
Dris	Bramble	Undergrowth	Essential food for insects in late summer – early autumn. Part of the woodland succession
Giolach Sléibhe	Broom	Undergrowth	Can be confused with Gorse, but no spines
Páide breán	Buckthorn	Shrub	Purging & Alder species
Feirdhris	Dog Rose	Shrub	Rarer – Burnet Rose species
Aiteann	Gorse	Shrub	Has many nicknames, Furze, Whins, etc., Important pollinator plant
Féithleann	Honeysuckle	Climber/Undergrowth	Stronger scent in evening to attract moths for pollination
Eidhneán	Ivy	Climber/Undergrowth	Pollen contains chemical that helps bees to go into a winter sleep (this is called torpor)
Aiteal	Juniper	Shrub	Likes rocky areas, esp. limestone. Evergreen



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Introduced Trees: Brought here by humans in the past 4 - 500 years – ask students to investigate where they were brought from (after workshop)

Geailge	Béarla	Layer in the Woods	Deciduous or Evergreen	Uses/Interesting Fact
Feá	Beech	Canopy	Deciduous	Some coppiced stands are 1000 yrs old. Mature trunk looks like an elephant's leg
Cran cnó capaill	Horse Chestnut	Canopy	Deciduous	Native to regions around Turkey. Conker nuts used to make medicine
Castán	Spanish/Sweet Chestnut	Canopy	Deciduous	Not related to Horse Chestnut. Valuable wood for furniture
Teile	Lime	Canopy	Deciduous	Flowers are collected to make a tea that is a calming drink for children
Seiceamóir	Sycamore	Canopy	Deciduous	Produces double keys called 'helicopters'
Crann sitka	Sitka	Canopy	Evergreen	Plantation tree – native to Alaska, Canada – called after the native Sitka community
Crann learóige	Larch	Canopy	Deciduous Conifer	Our only coniferous tree that loses it's leaves
Leamhán gallda	Elm – English	Canopy	Deciduous	Planted in demesnes and hedges. Dutch Elm disease affects it. Grows back from suckers



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New Words/Focal Nua	What does this mean?
Hard wood	Generally are deciduous with broad leaves, eg. Alder, Birch, Willow – grow more slowly than softwood
Soft Wood	Generally are coniferous – with needles, eg. Yew, Pines, Sitka Spruce – grow faster than hardwood
Deciduous	Lose their leaves in winter, eg. Rowan, Ash, Hawthorn. Seed generally found inside of fruit
Broadleaf	A tree with broad flat leaves, eg. Oak, Spindle, Crab Apple
Conifer	Needle-like or scale-like leaves. Seeds generally found inside of cones
Native	Living here since the end of the last Ice age (10 - 12,000 years ago)
Introduced	Brought here by humans in the past 4 - 500 years
Biodiversity	The foundation for all life on earth and it's interconnections. Biological Diversity (nature)
Coppice	Cutting a tree down to the ground and it re-grows by producing new shoots, eg. Hazel
Pollard	Cutting a tree back to approx. 8-10 feet, which encourages more new growth at the top



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New Words/Focal Nua	What does this mean?
Pioneer Species	First plants to colonise a disturbed/damaged ecosystem, beginning a chain of succession
Succession (Ecological)	The process of change in the species structure of a plant community over time – often towards a woodland/forest
Natural Woodland/ Forest	More than 80% native species. Different types according to location, eg. Oak/Holly. Most forests now are seminatural as they were planted and were working forests in the past, eg. used for coppicing, food, timber and fuel production
Forest Plantation	Currently are mainly mono-species, ie. Sitka, Larch. This is changing as part of government policy towards more diverse broadleaf planting
Mycelium	The invisible original 'world wide web' under our feet. Threads of fungal roots that connect trees and other plants, sending water, nutrients and chemical messages to each other. It flowers as a mushroom!
Agroforestry	A sustainable integrated system combining farm food production, crops, animals and trees in the same land
Continuous Cover Forestry (CCF)	Sustainable management of harvesting timber, instead of clear-felling. Canopy is continuously covered and soil is not exposed.
Forest Food Gardens	Planting succession layers to grow a woodland habitat. This is sustainable approach, combining agroforestry (fruit/nut/useful trees and shrubs) with herbs, vines, and perennial vegetables. Replicates the edge of a woodland and planted throughout history, eg. The Amazon



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