



Trá an Dóilín is located approximately 2 km to the south-west of Carraroe village, in the townland of An Cheathrú Rua Theas (Carraroe South). It faces west across Greatman's Bay to Gamna Island. 'An Dóilín' translates as 'the creek', which may refer to a small stream that enters the sea to the north of the beach.

Tá Trá an Dóilín suite tuairim is 2 km siar ó dheas ó shráidbhaille na Ceathrún Rua, i mbaile fearainn na Ceathrún Rua Theas. Tá a aghaidh siar aige trasna Chuan an Fhir Mhór i dtreo Gharma. Is ionann dóilín agus crompán agus d'fhéadfadh go bhfuil baint ag an ainm le sruthán beag a shreabann isteach san fharraige ó thuaidh den trá.

## A Coral Beach

Very often referred to as 'the Coral Beach at Carraroe' this beach is composed of märl rather than sand. Märl is red coralline seaweed that grows along the west coast of Ireland with extensive beds here in Greatman's Bay. The seaweed secretes a limey substance which stiffens its fronds and when it dies, the twig-like 'stone' fragments, are washed up on the beach. This type of beach material is washed up at only a few locations in Ireland and is a unique and fragile habitat.



## Trá Choiréalach

Tugtar Trá Choiréalach na Ceathrún Rua go minic ar an trá seo agus is as maerla seachas gaineamh a dhéantar é. Is feamainn dhearg choiréilneach a fhásann ar chósta thiar na hÉireann an maerla agus tá achar mór de ar ghrinéall Chuan an Fhir Mhór. Tálann an fheamainn substantiachailreach a strompann a cuid fronn agus nuair a bhásann sí, caitear i dtír ar an trá smiodar 'cloiche' a bhfuil cuma craoibhíní air. Níl ach roinnt bheag áiteanna in Éirinn a gcaitear i dtír an cineál sin ábhair thrá agus is gnáthó uathúil agus leochaileach atá ann.

## A Variety of Habitats

Grey granite rock, interspersed with rockpools and draped with seaweeds, surrounds the coral beach. Look closely and you will see that the rocky shore is divided into bands of different colours. This is because different plants and animals, which vary in colour, live on different parts of the shore depending on how long they can survive out of the water. The further up the shore they occur, the longer they must remain exposed, as the tide retreats.

The most obvious colours are created by lichens. Grey lichens inhabit the upper shore above a band of yellow lichens. The distinctive black tar lichen occurs next. It forms a band on the upper limits of the littoral fringe. Rock pools, inhabited by seaweeds, beadlet anemones, top shells and other animals trapped by the outgoing tide, are found in the lower zone. Seaweeds cling to the rocks, along the mid and lower shore, providing food and shelter for a variety of animals. Limpets and barnacles anchor themselves to the rocks to prevent themselves being washed out by the tide.

A huge diversity of flowering plants is found in the grassland above the beach. Clovers, plantains, mayweed, yarrow, knapweed, buttercup, nettle, ladies bedstraw, red dead nettle, chickweed, eyebright, milkwort and common daisy, all add to the vibrant colours of this area. In a cleft in the outcropping rock, a small area of reedmarsh inhabited by fresh water loving plants including reedgrass, sedges, mint, rushes and meadow sweet is found. Heather, furze, wild thyme and tormentil create a blaze of colour against the grey granite rock.

## Éagsúlacht Gnáthóg

Tá cloch eibhlí liath clúdaithe le feamainní agus locháin charraige scailpthe anseao agus ansiúd thart timpeall ar an trá choiréalach. Breathnaigh go cúramach agus feicfidh tú go bhfuil an cladach roinnt i mbandaí le dathanna diríula orthu. Is é an chíos leis sin go maireann plandaí agus ainmhithe diríula, a bhfuil dathanna éagsúla orthu, ar chodanna diríula den chladaigh agus é sin ag brath ar an méid ama ar féidir leo maireachtáil as an uisce. Dá fhaide thusa ar an gcladach iad, is mó an t-am a chaitheann siad triomaithe agus iad ag fanacht go dtuillfidh an taoide.

Is iad na léicín a chruthaíonn na dathanna is suntasaí. Maireann na léicín liatha ar an gcladach uachtair os cionn bhanda na léicean buí. Is é an léicean tarra dubh suaithinseach an chéad cheann eile. Is é a dhéanann banda ar theorainneacha uachtair an imill chladaichúil. Faigtear locháin charraige in iochtar cladaigh agus feamainní ag fás iontu mar aon le bundún choiréineacha, faocháin Mhuire agus ainmhithe eile a bhíonn sáinnithe iontu nuair a thránn an taoide. Binn feamainn i ngreim ar na carraigeacha i lár agus in iochtar an chladaigh agus cuireann siad beatha agus foscadh ar fáil do raon ainmhithe. Greamaíonn bairníg agus garbháin iad fén leis an gcarraig ionas nach scubtar amach san fharraige iad.

Faigtear éagsúlacht mhór plandaí bláthá ar an talamh fáraigh taobh thusa den trá. Cuireann na plandaí seo a leanas le dathanna beo na háite – an tseamair, náprún Phádraig, an lus Bealtaine mara, an athair thalún, an mhínscoth, an crobh préacháin, an neantog, an boladh cnis, an chaochneantog dhearg, an fhliodh, an glanosc, lus an bhainne agus an nónin. I síúnta sa lomán carraige, tá achar beag de riasc giolcái ina bhfuil plandaí a dtaitnfionn floruisce leo, ina measc an féar giolcúil, an chib, an mismín, an luachair agus an t-airgead luachra. Cuireann an fraoch, an t-aiteann, an tím agus an néalfartach le loinnir datha in aghaidh na cloiche eibhlí léithe.

