



## GALWAY'S LIVING LANDSCAPES PART 2: TREES AND WOODLAND

TÍRDHREACHA BEO NA GAILLIMHE  
CUID 2: CRAINN AGUS COILLEARNACH



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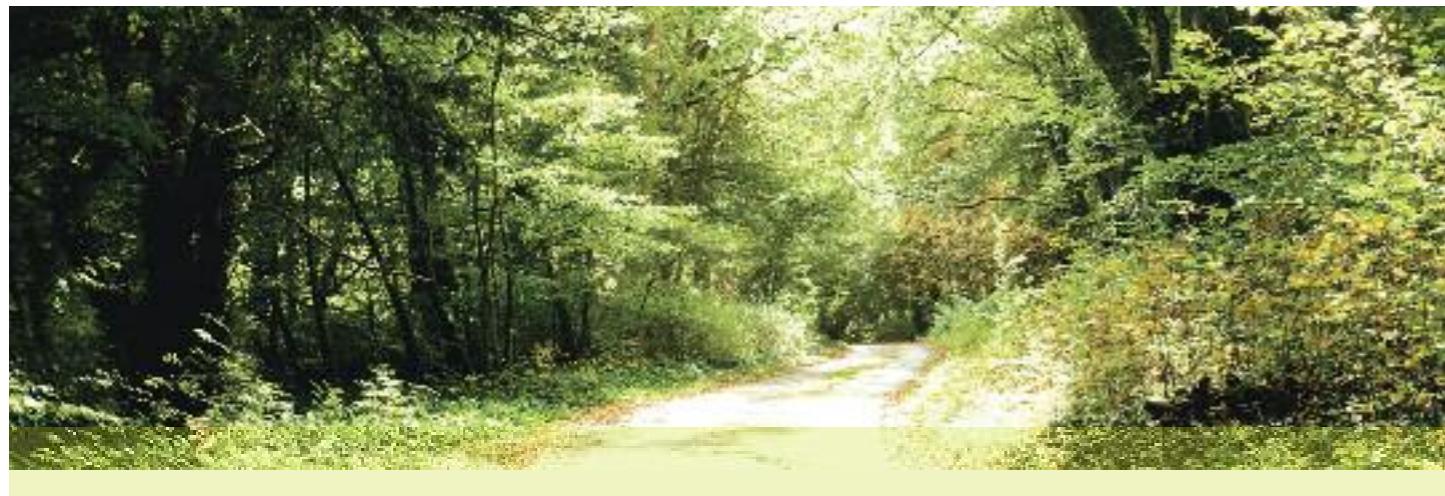
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**INTRODUCTION** This book aims to demonstrate the many benefits trees have for people, landscapes, wildlife and the environment. It highlights our long association with trees and rich tree heritage in Galway. It celebrates trees and tree-culture, provides information on how to plant and protect trees, and hopefully will inspire people to plant more trees, and to protect our native woodlands. Trees and woods are an integral part of Galway's 'living landscapes'.

The strong connection our ancestors had with trees became a distant memory when our woodlands were reduced to tiny remnants of their former glory by the 18th century. People are starting to reconnect with trees and woodlands as they seek to add something special to their gardens and community spaces, farms and fields, and more and more people are out enjoying woodlands for walking and exploring. Many people and communities are going native when planting trees and choosing from the array of beautiful trees and shrubs that are native to Ireland. As well as their aesthetic and recreational value, trees and woods represent an invaluable resource which if used sustainably has the potential to provide timber and environmental benefits for generations.



Bluebell Woods in Woodville Garden  
Coillte Coinne Corra i nGairdín  
Woodville (David Ruffles)



Gelder Rose in autumn / Caor Chon san fhómhar

## RÉAMHRÁ

Tá sé mar aidhm ag an leabhar seo an iliomad tairbhí atá ag crainn don duine, do thírdhreacha, don fhiadhúlra agus don chomhshaol a léiriú. Cuirtear béis ar an gceangal fada atá againn le crainn agus le hoidhreachta shaibhir na gcrann i nGaillimh. Déantar ceiliúradh ar chrainn agus ar chultúr na gcrann, tugtar faisnéis ar an gaoi le crainn a chur agus a chosaint, agus táthar ag súil go spreagfaidh sé daoine le tuilleadh crann a chur agus lenár gcoilleannacha dúchasacha a chosaint. Is cuid dhílis de 'thírdhreacha beo' na Gaillimhe iad na crainn agus na coillte.

D'imigh an ceangal láidir a bhí ag ár sinsear le crainn as cuimhne na ndaoine nuair a laghdaíodh ár gcoilleannacha roimh an 18ú haois go dtí iarsmaí bídeacha dióbh mar a bhí siad agus iad i mbarr a réime. Tá athcheangal á dhéanamh ag daoine le crainn agus le coilleannacha agus iad ag iarraidh rud éigin speisialta a chur lena ngairdíní agus a spás phoiblí, a bhfeirmeacha agus a bpáircéanna agus de réir a chéile tá níos mó daoine amuigh ag baint taitnímh as coilleannacha i gcomhair siúlóide agus taiscéalaíochta. Tá cuid mhaith daoine agus pobal ag díriú ar a ndúchas nuair atá crainn á gcur agus rogha á dhéanamh acu ón réimse crann agus tom álainn atá dúchasach in Éirinn. Chomh maith lena luach aeistéitiúil agus áineasa, is acmhainn fhíorluachmhar na crainn agus na coillte, agus má úsáidtear ar bhealach inbhuanaithe í tá an cumas inti adhmad agus tairbhe comshaoil a sholáthar do na glúine amach anseo.



Willow catkins  
Caitíní Sáilí



Long-tailed Tit (Colin Stanley) / Meantán Earrfada



## THE WONDER OF TREES

Trees can take our breath away. We are filled with awe and wonder at the sight of an ancient gnarled and twisted oak tree, festooned with ferns and encrusted with lichens. We marvel at the sight of a little holly tree glistening green and red on a bitterly cold winter's day when everything else is bare and twiggy. We are delighted to see the fresh, green shoots of hazel and birch and oak unfolding in spring, signalling the imminent arrival of summer and longer, warmer days.



Holly and Spindle /  
Cuileann agus Fearas

Trees inspire. For generations, trees have been recorded and celebrated in poems, songs, stories and place names. Trees bear silent witness to the passing of time. Ancient trees have lived through feast and famine, war and peace, the coldest of winters and warmest of summers. Trees enhance our rural landscapes - lone majestic trees in fields, wild woods that invite adventure, scrubby hillsides a blazon with colour in spring and autumn, and hedgerows that criss-cross the countryside and teem with life in summer. Trees soften the edges of urban areas, adding colour, texture, life and interest to our towns and villages. The solemn yew adds gravitas to historic graveyards. Trees have long provided us with shelter and protection, fuel and food, the air we breathe.



## IONTAS NA GCRANN

Is féidir le crainn an anáil a bhaint dínn. Bíonn uamhan agus iontas orainn nuair a fheicimid crann ársa darach fadharcánach agus casta, maisithe le raithneach agus screamhaíthe le léicin. Déanaimid iontas de radharc de chrann beag cuilinn agus é ag glioscarnach faoi uaine agus faoi dhearg ar lá fuar feannta nuair atá gach rud eile lom agus craobhach. Bíonn áthas orainn péacáin úra uaine an choill, na beithe agus na darach a fheiceáil á noctadh féin san earrach, iad ag tabhairt le fios go bhfuiltear ar thairseach an tsamhraidh agus go bhfuil laethanta fada te ar an mbealach.

Spreagann crainn. Ar feadh na nglún, taifeadadh agus ceiliúradh crainn i ndánta, in amhráin, i scéalta agus i logainmneacha. Déanann na crainn fianaise le meilt na haimsire. Mhair crainn ársa trí thréimhsí féasta agus gorta, cogaidh agus síochána, agus thíainig siad slán as na geimhrí ab fheannta agus na samhraí ba theo. Cuireann crainn lenár dtírdhreacha tuaithe - crainn mhaorga aonair i bpáircéanna, coillte fhiáine a ghriosaíonn an taiscéalaíocht, cliathán chnoic faoi scrobarnach lonrach ildaite san earrach agus san fhómhar agus fálta sceach a thrasnaíonn an tuath agus iad beo beathach sa samhradh. Maolaíonn crainn colbhaí na gceantar uirbeach agus cuireann dath, uigeacht, beocht agus ábhar spéise inár mbailte agus inár sráidbhailte. Cuireann an tiúr sollúnta le *gravitas* na reiligí stairiúla. Tá foscadh agus cosaint, breosla agus bia, agus an t-aer a análaímid á soláthar ag crainn dúinn le fada an lá.



Wood Anemone / Lus na Gaoithe



Hazel catkins / Caitíni Coill

Woodlands are wonderful places to visit and explore because they are always changing; over seasons, years, decades and centuries. Irish woodlands in winter are bare and bright places. Spring is heralded by the appearance of flowers on the woodland floor. These beautiful spring flowers - Lesser Celandine, Wood Anemone and Wood Sorrel - flower before the leaves appear on the trees casting a dense shade. Wind-pollinated trees such as Hazel, Alder and Birch have special flowers called catkins, which also appear before the leaves so that the pollen can be blown about easily. As leaves start to unfurl in the woodland canopy, other woodland flowers such as Bluebells and Wild Garlic make an appearance. Still others can cope with low light levels and appear in summer - Violets, Herb Robert, Enchanter's Nightshade and Lords and Ladies. In autumn, the green woodland canopy changes to browns, reds and yellows as the cooler evenings draw in and the days shorten.

## TREES AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Our environment benefits greatly from trees, hedgerows and woodland. Trees take up the gas carbon dioxide ( $\text{CO}_2$ ) as they grow, converting it into solid carbon i.e. wood, and releasing oxygen. In this way, they can act as carbon stores for as long as they are alive, which may be decades or centuries. Globally, woodlands and forests are hugely important as carbon stores. Wide-scale deforestation has led to increases in atmospheric  $\text{CO}_2$  and decreased the Earth's capacity to take up  $\text{CO}_2$ . The rise in atmospheric  $\text{CO}_2$  is thought to be one of the main drivers of global climate change.

Trees on the landscape also intercept a considerable amount of water thus helping to prevent soil erosion and flooding. In urban environments the leaves of trees take up airborne pollutants and help keep the air we breathe clean.



Hawthorn in a cold winter / Sceach Ghéal sa gheimhreadh