

There is an extensive area of callows to the north of the Water Recreation Park with Reed Canary Grass, Meadowsweet, Ragged Robin, Angelica, sedges and rushes. The relatively rare Marsh Pea is also present. Callow grasslands extend northwards on either side of the River Shannon. Reed swamp and callows provide nesting and foraging habitats for many birds, and are often teeming with insects, especially dragonflies and damselflies, and snails.



*Marsh pea*



*Callows north of Portumna (Photo: Micheline Sheehy Skeffington)*



*View of callows looking north from the swimming area*

## 2 Portumna Forest Park, Co. Galway

SAT NAV: 53.0829, -8.2407

38



*Juniper in the foreground Portumna Forest Park*

Portumna Forest Park<sup>2</sup> is located just west of Portumna Town. The Park can be accessed from the R352 or you can walk from Portumna Marina close to the centre of town (or indeed the swimming area mentioned above). Originally part of the Portumna Castle Demesne, the Park is a popular recreational amenity with kilometres of walking trails including four way-marked trails. The **White Trail** is the 'Forest Friendly' walking trail and is suitable for buggies and wheelchairs (1.4 km), the **Blue Trail** is the 'Woodland Walk' (2km), the **Green Trail** is the 'Rinmaher Walking Trail' (10km) and finally the **Red Trail**, the Bonaveen Walking Trail (10km). All trails begin at the Forest Park information centre next to the car park and are well-signposted. They are open to mountain bikers, as well as, walkers. There are picnic tables adjacent to the main carpark and the information centre.

Portumna Forest Park contains an extensive area of woodland the majority of which is a coniferous plantation with Scots Pine, Sitka and Norway Spruce.

<sup>2</sup><http://www.everytrail.com/guide/portumna-forest-park-woodland-trails>

There are also, some significant areas of native Oak woodland with Oak, Ash, Holly and Silver Birch, and stands of other broadleaves such as Beech and Maples. Our native conifers, Yew and Juniper can be seen along the lake shore, as well as reed swamp, marsh and wet woodland with Willow and Alder.

39

The Forest Park is a stronghold for Red Squirrel. There is also large herd of Fallow Deer. Pine Marten are present but they are shy animals and not easily seen. If walking off the trail, you might come across a Badger sett. Many woodland birds can be spotted or heard in the park including Tits, Crossbill, Treecreeper, Jays, Blackcap, Willow Warbler, Chiffchaff and Sparrowhawk. A large Cormorant colony can be seen nesting on offshore islands near Rinmaher (follow the Green Trail) and Black-headed Gulls breed on the islands. White-tailed Sea Eagles have been seen occasionally offshore and in the Bonaveen area. On a sunny day keep an eye out for butterflies along the woodland rides (including the rare Purple Hairstreak), dragonflies (with exciting names like Spring Hawkers and Four-spotted Chaser), and damselflies (also with evocative names like Banded Jewelwing, Azure Bluet and Common Bluetip) nearer the shore in the wetlands.

### Crossbill

Once a rarity in Ireland, the Common Crossbill has now colonised many areas including the Slieve Aughty mountains due to the spread of forestry. Crossbills have unique sideways curved bills evolved for extracting the seeds of pine cones. Although difficult to spot in the high tree-tops, crossbills do come down to roadside puddles to drink. Look out for the stunning crimson males and greenish females and the distinctive, loud piping calls of travelling flocks!

### 3 Abbeyville Golden Mile, Abbey, Co. Galway

SAT NAV 53.1022, -8.3918



Abbey is a delightful small village in the foothills of the Sliabh Aughties. Parking is available in the village across the road from the Catholic Church. The Abbeyville Golden Mile walk starts a short distance away from the village centre. Just follow the sign for St. Feichín's Cemetery and Holy Well and you will come to the stone marker that indicates the beginning of the route. You can walk the mile along a quiet country road, or further if you wish. This award-winning mile is a community initiative to provide a safe and attractive walking route in the locality. Biodiversity has been enhanced on the route with bug hotels and a wildflower meadow. The road is lined with leafy hedgerows of Hawthorn, Blackthorn, Honeysuckle and Holly. Ash trees are abundant in the hedgerows locally providing a wooded feel to the area. The route eventually comes to the stone bridge over the Lacken River, a tributary of the Cappagh River, which flows on to Lough Derg. If you continue on, you will see conifer plantation on the horizon and many mature Ash trees in the fields. This

lovely walking route highlights the landscape in the hinterland of Lough Derg with good farmland, lush hedgerows, rushy fields, woodland, rivers and streams. Keep an eye out for hedgerow birds such as Thrushes, Wrens and Tits. Lough Derg can be seen in the distance as you wander along the Golden Mile.





## 4 Derrycrag Wood, Co. Galway

SAT NAV 53.0441, -8.3983

42



Derrycrag Wood is a Nature Reserve just south of Woodford Town. There are two well-signposted looped trails in the woodland- the **Red Trail** (3.3 km) and the **Green Trail** (2.2 km). Much of Derrycrag Wood is under conifers but there is a substantial area of native Oak woodland, which is remnant of the mighty Oak woods that once cloaked most of the Slieve Aughty Mountains. Native woodland is a relatively rare habitat in Ireland and ancient woodland is particularly rare. There is some evidence to suggest that Derrycrag has been under woodland for centuries if not thousands of year. There are two other Nature Reserves in the Woodford area (Poulnaknockaun and Rosturra) that also contain ancient Oak woodland and are worth a visit (see [www.npws.ie](http://www.npws.ie)). Rosturra is also a People's Millennium Forest ([www.millenniumforests.com/location\\_ecorost.html](http://www.millenniumforests.com/location_ecorost.html))

Numerous magnificent Oak trees can be seen in Derrycrag. Holly is abundant in the understorey. Other trees to look out for include Scots Pine, Ash, Birch, Rowan and Beech. The woodland floor is carpeted

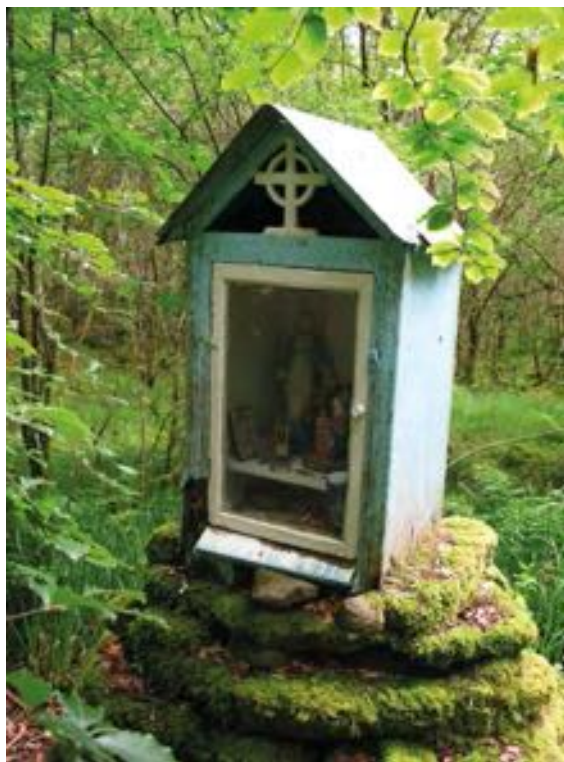
with Bilberry. Both Pine Martin and Badger have been recorded in these woods but both are quite elusive. Keep an eye out for Red Squirrel too. Derrycrag provides a home for most of the typical woodland birds such as Tits, Treecreeper, Jay, Sparrowhawk and Long-tailed Tit. Woodcock, an unusual wader that lives in woodlands, has also been recorded in Derrycrag. The best way to see Woodcock is to walk around a damp wood in early summer and look out for them doing their dusk 'roding' display flight. Woodcock patrol just above the tree tops, alternating high-pitched 'wizzik' calls with soft bass croaking.

The Woodford River flows through Derrycrag Wood and the relatively rare shrub, Bird Cherry, grows along the river in patches. Look out for the holy well and shrine that can be found in the heart of Derrycrag Wood.

43



*The Woodford River flows through Derrycrag Wood and into Lough Derg*



*Holy Well and Shrine in Derrycrag Wood*



*Bird Cherry in flower*

## 5 Rosmore Pier, Co. Galway

SAT NAV 53.0173, -8.3109



*Reed swamp at Rosmore*



*Flowering Rush*

Rosmore is a fine quay in a very beautiful and secluded location. The long road down from the main road (R352) is highly scenic with the pastoral landscapes that characterise much of Lough Derg; good quality farmland with mature hedgerows and trees, many of which are Oak.

From the car park at the pier there are great views of the lake and fringing wetlands. Common Club-Rush dominates the watery wetlands around much of the lake and the beautiful Flowering Rush can be seen near the pier. Rosmore Pier is an excellent spot for bird-watching and fishing. During the winter it's a good place to look for wintering duck such as Teal, Tufted Duck, Pochard and Goldeneye. Great-crested and Little Grebes, Common Tern and Black-headed Gull are common during the breeding season in summer. Keep an eye out for otters offshore. The pier is sheltered by mature trees, Sessile Oak, Alder and Ash.



## 6 Coos-East Clare Way, Cos. Galway & Clare

SAT NAV 52.9783, -8.3734



46

The East Clare Way runs close to the western edge of Lough Derg in several locations, one of which is Coos in the foothills of the Slieve Aughties<sup>3</sup>. Parking is limited but ask locally for suggestions. A good starting point is just off the R352 (SAT NAV 52.9783, -8.3734). You can head inland (west of the road) along a trail and cross through conifer plantation and blanket bog. Good footwear is essential for this option. Alternatively you can walk east of the road (following the signs) and stay on the small back road that leads all the way to Whitegate Village, passing by woodland and wetland.

If you take the upland route, and are very lucky you may get a glimpse of a Hen Harrier, a large bird of prey which breeds in the Slieve Aughties in the summer

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.clarewalks.com/east-clare-way-page.html>

months (April-August). Watch out for the stunning aerial “skydancing” displays of the silvery grey males in April! Other birds that can be seen include the common woodland birds such as Tits, Treecreeper, Jay, Crossbill and upland birds such as the rare and elusive Merlin, our smallest falcon. Other species of interest that may be seen include Fallow Deer and Red Squirrel.



*Walking the East Clare Way (Photo: Allan Mee)*



*Red Squirrel (Photo: Colin Stanley)*

47

## 7 Dromaan Harbour, Williamstown, Co. Clare

SAT NAV 52.9436, -8.3312

48



To find Dromaan Harbour, follow the signs for Williamstown Harbour from Whitegate Village and the first harbour you come to is a public harbour at Dromann, run by Inland Waterways Ireland (Williamstown Harbour is a bit further up the road). The winding road from the main road (R352) is highly scenic with many mature trees in the fields and hedgerows, and wonderful landscape views. The small harbour has a fine marina and sheltered picnic areas as it is

surrounded by mature trees (Alder, Ash, Scots Pine and Willow). There are great views across Lough Derg from the harbour and further along the road. Wetlands fringe the lake, dominated by the Common Club Rush.

The harbour is a good location for birdwatching with ducks such as Tufted Duck, Mallard, Teal, Wigeon and Goldeneye to be seen in winter, along with Great-crested and Little Grebes, Coot and Cormorant in summer. Listen out for the buzzing song of Sedge Warblers among the reeds. White-tailed Sea Eagles often fish in the harbour and perch on trees along the shoreline. Otters are occasionally seen along the lake shore. Look out for damselflies such as the Common Spreadwing and Common Bluet.

49



*Scots Pine*

There are a few local walking routes in the Williamstown area that highlight the beautiful watery and pastoral landscapes in this area, and the rich cultural and built heritage<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> <http://walks.iwai.ie/derg/whitegate.shtml>

## 8 Church Bay, Co. Clare

SAT NAV 52.9325, -8.3583

Church Bay is a short distance from Dromaan Harbour and also worth a visit. There are lovely views of the small islands in the Bay, Church Island and Pingroe Islands, and the beautiful old graveyard of Clonrush. The Bay is named after an old parish church that once stood within the graveyard but has long been in ruins. Extensive reed swamps provide good habitat for wildfowl such as Moorhen, Coot, Little Grebe, Great Crested Grebe and Mallard.

50



*Extensive wetland in Church Bay (Photo: Allan Mee)*



*Moorhen (Photo: Tom Cuffe)*

## 9 Mountshannon, Co. Clare

SAT NAV 52.9292, -8.4291



51

Mountshannon is a lively village with a bustling pier, marina, swimming area and park. The star attraction in Mountshannon is undoubtedly the White-tailed Eagle. A Bird Viewing and Information Point run by the local community is situated on the pier from which nesting White-tailed Sea Eagles can often be spotted in the summer. During the breeding season, the Bird Viewing Information Point, provides information on the birds, and binoculars and telescopes are available to use. Mountshannon is one of only a few places in Ireland that Eagles can be seen nesting.



Mountshannon pier is also an excellent spot to observe other waterbirds including Great-crested and Little Grebes, Common Tern, ducks including Tufted Duck, Teal, Merganser, Wigeon and Goldeneye, various gulls including the rare Mediterranean Gull, Common Sandpiper, Kingfisher and Cormorant. Mute Swans gather in late summer to moult and gain new feathers. Whimbrel pass through in late spring when their trilling calls can be heard especially on migration north at night. There is also a park in the village, *Aistear*, which is beautifully landscaped with many trees and shrubs, and has a fantastic willow sculpture maze.

52



*White-tailed Sea Eagle chick (Photo: Allan Mee)*

## 10 Inis Cealtra, Co. Clare

SAT NAV 52.9158, -8.4499



*View of Inis Cealtra (Photo: Velma Mercer)*

53

*Inis Cealtra* or Holy Island is located in the south-western end of Lough Derg, just south of Mountshannon and at the entrance to Scarriff Bay. It can be accessed by using the licensed operator from Mountshannon Harbour. Boat trips can be arranged through East Clare Heritage Tours.<sup>5</sup>



*Ruins on Iniscealtra (Photo: Allan Mee)*

<sup>5</sup> <http://eastclareheritage.com/holy-island/>

*Inis Cealtra* is famous as the site of a 7th century monastery founded by St. Caimin and sacked by the Vikings in 836 and 922. The 25m round tower is the dominant feature on the island and can be seen from miles around. Tufted Duck, Mallard, Teal and Coot can be seen on the boat trip to the island as well as Great-crested and Little Grebe. Look out also for the spectacular White-tailed Sea Eagle which nests nearby in Mountshannon Bay. On the island itself common garden and woodland birds can be seen and heard including Long-tailed Tits, Whitethroat, Blackcap, Song Thrush, Chaffinch, Robin, and Blue Tit. In winter and spring, flocks of Lapwing, Golden Plover and Whimbrel on passage can be seen or heard.

54



Lapwing (Photo: Eamon Brennan)

## 11 Woodpark, Co. Clare

SAT NAV 52.9335, -8.4550



55

Woodpark is a Coillte-owned broadleaf and conifer woodland with a variety of trees including Spruce, Oak, Ash, Beech, Holly, Birch and Sycamore. The wood has four walking trails to explore, the longest of which, the The Long Walk, takes about an hour. Woodland flowers such

as Bluebells, Wild Garlic, Wood Sorrel and Enchanter's nightshade appear in spring and early summer. Typical woodland birds such as Tits, Treecreeper, Jay and Sparrowhawk can be seen and heard. Red Squirrel can sometimes be spotted and the keen observer might catch a glimpse of the resident Pine Marten. There are small streams running through the wood and patches of wet woodland with Willow and Alder.



Bluebells

56

## 12 Raheen Wood, Co. Clare

SAT NAV 52.8937, -8.5319



Raheen Wood is located just outside Tuamgraney village and the accessible part of the wood is managed as a Community Woodland. Raheen Wood is a mixed woodland with conifers, Oak, Ash, Birch, Holly and Hazel. There are trails running through the community woodland that can be explored and enjoyed.

Conifers were cleared in this area and native trees such as Oak, Rowan and Ash were planted as part of an innovative community project. Interpretive signage for the wood was also erected for the benefit of the local community and visitors.

Raheen Wood is home to many woodland birds including Crossbill, Tits, Treecreeper, Jay and Sparrowhawk amongst others. Lucky walkers may also spot a Pine Marten or a Badger Sett. Keep an eye out for woodland and woodland edge butterflies such as Speckled Wood, Wood White and the rare Purple Hairstreak.

57



Red Squirrel are found in the area and it appears that the lake is still a barrier to Grey Squirrels crossing from the East into County Clare.

Other accessible natural sites of interest in the Tuamgraney area include the East Clare Famine Memorial Park, Reddens Quay and Scarriff Harbour.

The Community Woodland can be accessed from the R463 on the Killaloe side of the Village. Parking is available but limited.

58



*Raheen Wood (Photo: Allan Mee)*

### 13 Aughinish Wood, Co. Clare

SAT NAV 52.8870, -8.4313

Aughinish Wood is an out of the way woodland right on the shore of Lough Derg on a small headland. The intrepid explorer will be rewarded if they make the trip to this secluded and beautiful lakeside woodland. This Coillte-owned wood is a mix of Conifers, Oak and Alder, and there is quite a bit of Scots pine, especially along the shoreline and on small islands just offshore. There appears to have been woodland at Aughinish for some time as it is marked as wooded on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of the site (1842). The wood holds most of the common woodland birds, Tits, Treecreeper, Jay and Sparrowhawk. Red Squirrel, Badger, Pine Marten and the Fallow Deer also inhabit the woodland. There are no way-marked trails but there are small paths running through the woods.

59



*Alder and Scot's pine on the lakeshore*

## 14 Ballycuggaran Forest & Rinnaman Point, Co. Clare

SAT NAV 52.8346, -8.4638



The Ballycuggaran Forest Recreation Area<sup>6</sup> and Rinnaman Point are just 3km north of Killaloe in County Clare. There is a public carpark for the swimming area at Rinnaman Point, known locally as Two Mile Gate, just next to the University of Limerick Activity Centre. You can access the swimming area, the woodland along the point and the trails in Ballycuggaran from this carpark although there is additional parking within the wood.

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.coillteoutdoors.ie/uploads/tx\\_r3coilltere creationsites/ballycuggaran\\_crag\\_wood\\_walk.pdf](http://www.coillteoutdoors.ie/uploads/tx_r3coilltere creationsites/ballycuggaran_crag_wood_walk.pdf)



Rinnaman Point (Photo: Allan Mee)

There are excellent views of the lake from the small bay at Rinnaman. You can wander from the carpark through the lakeside woodland on the Point and enjoy the sights and sounds of the woods and the lake. If you would like a more challenging walk, and want to explore the uplands, there are two trails that run through Ballycuggaran across the road from the parking for the swimming area. The Crag Wood Walk (6km) heads up Crag Hill on the lower slopes of the Slieve Bearnagh Mountains. There are some spectacular views of the lake from this trail. The main trees to be seen en route are Spruce, Larch, Fir, Oak, Beech and Ash. The higher slopes are cloaked in heather-rich heathland, blanket bog, and swathes of bracken. Woodland birds such as Crossbill, Tits, Treecreeper, Jay and Woodcock can be seen and heard in Ballycuggaran Wood. Red Squirrel, Pine Marten, Badger, Fallow Deer and the occasional Wild Goat live in the woods too.

## 15 Killaloe-Ballina, Cos Clare-Tipperary

SAT NAV 52.8100, -8.4491



Killaloe and Ballina are towns with a rich history and heritage located on either side of the River Shannon as it exits Lough Derg in Counties Clare and Tipperary

respectively. Parking is available in both towns, and just adjacent to the bridge in Killaloe where there are good views of the River Shannon and the southern reaches of the lake. The line of the old railway line in Ballina provides a short walk by the Washer's Women Bridge to Riverside Park, which is a sanctuary for wildlife and where there is interpretive signage. In Killaloe, a board walk on the lake runs along a former canal built in 1709 to bypass the rapids on the river but became redundant in 1929 as water levels were raised with the building of the hydroelectric power station downriver. For the long distance walkers it is possible to walk all the way to Limerick from Killaloe-Ballina on the Lough Derg Way along the banks of the River Shannon. This highly scenic walk runs through wonderful wetlands and highly scenic countryside, and offers more views of waterfowl. While in Killaloe-Ballina, look out for birds such as Cormorant, Mallard, and Tufted Duck in summer, and Goldeneye in winter.



Canal at Killaloe



**16** Castletown (The Lookout), Co. Tipperary

SAT NAV 52.8792, -8.3935

*View from The Lookout with Castlough Woods in the distance*

64

The Lookout, a viewing area north of Killaloe-Ballina on the R494 on the eastern side of the lake, is not to be missed on any tour of Lough Derg as here you will find spectacular views of the lake. Some of the islands on the western shore can be seen including Inis Cealtra or Holy Island, Castlough Woods to the north hugging the shore of the lake, and the Arra Mountains and Slieve Bearnagh to the south

White-tailed Sea Eagles have been sighted in this area and a congregation of Mute Swans is often visible in the foreground at Castlough. The Lookout is a good starting point to explore the Arra Mountains as you can join the Lough Derg Way here and head up into the hills. There are outstanding views of Lough Derg from the trail and you will encounter woodland, blanket bog and heathland as the trail rises.

**17** Castlough Woods, Co. Tipperary

SAT NAV 52.9018, -8.3824



Castlough Wood is another out of the way woodland right of the shore of Lough Derg. The wood is a former Deer Park (an enclosed area of land for keeping a herd of deer) as shown on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map for the area. It is enclosed by a high dry stone wall. Castlough Wood comprises over 50ha of mixed woodland that can be explored by following the network of forest trails through the woods and along the lake shore<sup>7</sup>. The woods are a mix of conifers and broadleaves including Beech, Norway Spruce, Ash, Oak, Alder, Birch, Cherry, Scots Pine and Douglas Fir. The strip of ground between the Deer Park and the lakeshore is wooded with mature Oak, Hazel and Holly with a scattering of Wild Cherry, Crab Apple and Yew. Alder and a few Buckthorn are also present along the shore.

65

<sup>7</sup> [http://www.coillteoutdoors.ie/uploads/tx\\_r3coilltere creationsites/CastloughSiteMap.pdf](http://www.coillteoutdoors.ie/uploads/tx_r3coilltere creationsites/CastloughSiteMap.pdf)

Castlelough Woods are popular with birdwatchers as there is access to many quite spots with views of the lake and waterbirds, and woodland birds can be heard and sometimes seen while strolling through the woods. Castlelough is home to several woodland birds including Tits, Treecreeper, Jay, Sparrowhawk and Woodcock. Summer migrants include Willow Warbler, Chiffchaff, Blackcap and Spotted Flycatcher. Red Squirrels have also been recorded in the wood. Duck such as Mallard, Teal and Tufted Duck can be seen offshore along with Grebes and Mute Swan. There is a swimming area near the entrance to the woods.



## 18 Garrykennedy, Co. Tipperary

SAT NAV 52.9051, -8.3450



*Old pier at Garrykennedy*

Garrykennedy is a beautiful village on the eastern shore of Lough Derg, just north of Portroe, with a fine harbour and marina. Garrykennedy has great views across Lough Derg to the Clare shore and north to Ryan's Point. Breeding Great-crested and Little Grebes and duck such as Teal and Mallard are commonly seen as well as the ubiquitous Coot. Other ducks such as Goldeneye and Wigeon can be seen in winter. The lake is fringed with woodland and wetland on either side of Garrykennedy harbour, greatly enhancing the local landscape. Walkers can enjoy these watery woods and wetlands by following the Lough Derg Way either north or south of the village. The woodland along the shore contains a mix of trees including Scots Pine, Norway Spruce, Larch, Oak, Ash, Rowan, Birch, Holly, Willow and Alder.



68

Heron (Photo: Eamon Brennan)



Garrykennedy marina

## 19 Youghal Bay, Co. Tipperary

SAT NAV 52.8987, -8.3101

Youghal Bay is a large bay on eastern shore of Lough Derg and a renowned angling location. Parking is available in Youghal Village. Youghal Bay supports small populations of breeding Great-crested and Little Grebes, as well as Coot and various types of ducks which can be seen from the small harbour. Goldeneye, as well as more common ducks, such as Tufted Duck, Gadwall, Pochard, Mallard and Teal, can be spotted here in winter. The elusive Otter can sometimes be seen. There are extensive reed swamp wetlands in the Bay, particularly west of the harbour where several rivers and streams flow into the lake. You can walk from the village centre eastwards along the Lough Derg Way and through a landscape of rolling farmland, wet woodland and wetlands. The area on either side of the Newtown River (1.5km east of Youghal Village) is known locally as 'The Callows' reflecting the vast swathes of reed swamp and wet willowy woods in the inner reaches of Youghal Bay and at the mouth of Youghal and Newtown Rivers.

69



Reedswamp



## 20 Ryan's Point, Co. Tipperary

SAT NAV 52.9192, -8.2998

The long distance walking route, the Lough Derg Way, can also be accessed at Ryan's Point (note: limited parking). The route is particularly scenic at the Point as there is a fringe of woodland along the shore of the lake. Ryan's Point lies in the townland of Garraunfadda or *Garrán Fada* meaning "the long grove", possibly reflecting a long history of tree cover along the lakeshore. Common garden and woodland edge birds including Long-tailed Tit and Jay can be seen along the trail. Offshore Grebes can often be seen in summer and winter.

## 21 Dromineer Bay, Co. Tipperary

SAT NAV 52.9250, -8.2789

Dromineer is a picturesque village on the eastern shore of Lough Derg. Situated on the mouth of the Nenagh River (the name in Irish *Drom Inbhir* means 'ridge of the river mouth'), there are great views of the lake from the quay. Water fowl to look out for in Dromineer Bay include Great-crested and Little Grebes, Tufted Duck, Mallard, Teal, Wigeon and Coot. The Slí Eala walking route can be accessed from Dromineer. The route follows the Nenagh River all the way to Nenagh Town (10 km). It is a highly scenic and peaceful walking route through rolling countryside. The Lough Derg Way starts (or ends!) in the village too and runs all the way to Limerick.



Mallard (Photo: Velma Mercer)



Wigeon (Photo: Tom Cuffe)

## 22 Luska Bay, Coolbaun, Co. Tipperary

SAT NAV 52.9681, -8.2668



Luska Bay is a quiet bay south-west of Coolbaun signposted from the main road (R493). The little road that runs along the edge of Luska Bay is highly scenic with glimpses of lake and wetlands, fields, woods and hedgerows. There is a small parking area in front of the playground right on the lakeshore. There is a vast extent of wetland in the bay with Common Reed, Canary Reed, Common Club Rush, Purple Loosestrife, Water-mint and Angelica, and many more herbs, rushes, sedges and grasses.



Reed swamp with Angelica

The bay looks out on the island of Illaunmore and Cameron. Common Terns and Black-headed Gulls breed nearby and can be seen foraging in the bay. Coot, Mallard, and Teal are common with Wigeon, Gadwall, Pochard and Goldeneye to be seen in winter. Common Sandpiper, Sedge Warbler and Reed Bunting can also be seen or heard in summer and the resident but elusive Water Rail. Listen out for the reeling insect-like song of the Grasshopper Warbler over the reeds too. Great-crested and Little Grebes nest on the lake shore. Hen Harriers occasionally hunt over the marsh in winter. Buzzards breed locally while White-tailed Sea Eagles occasionally roost on offshore islands such as Cameron and Islandbrien. Keep a look out for otters along the shore too.



Grasshopper Warbler (Photo: Tom Cuffe)

## 23 Cominchas Wood, Coolbaun, Co. Tipperary

SAT NAV 52.9964, -8.2633



Cominchas Wood is a Coillte property just north of Coolbaun. The woods occupy a small limestone hill and can be easily explored by following the White trail – a 50 minute walk which takes in the main viewing point – or the Green trail – which takes about 20 minutes. There are extensive panoramic views over Lough Derg from the highest point of the walking circuit. The woods are composed of a mix of broadleaf and conifer plantation. Much of the conifer plantation has been felled and is being replaced with native trees such as Oak and Ash. Throughout these woods there are stands of Ash, Oak, Rowan, Hazel and Beech scattered among the conifer plantation. Cominchas is home to typical woodland birds including Tits, Warblers (summer), Treecreepers, Jay and Sparrowhawk. Keep an eye out for Red Squirrel too or Badger setts. Old woodland wild flowers may be seen in spring, including Bluebells, Primroses and Violets.



Coal Tit (Photo: Ruairi Goodwin)



Ringlet (Photo: Tom Cuffe)

## 24 Terryglass, Co. Tipperary

SAT NAV 53.0595, -8.2071



Terryglass is a picture-postcard village on the north-eastern shore of Lough Derg with a rich built and natural heritage. In Irish, *Tír Dhá Ghlas* means “land of the two streams”. Many waterbirds can be seen from the busy harbour including Common Tern, Black-headed Gull, Great-crested and Little Grebes, Cormorant, and ducks such as Tufted Duck, Wigeon, Goldeneye and Pochard in winter. White-tailed Sea Eagles are seen on occasion. The village is landscaped beautifully with trees and grassland, and there are extensive wetlands dominated by Common Club-rush along the shore. There is a ‘Little Wood Trail’ through the trees down by the harbour that reveals a spectacular view of the lake.





Old church in Terryglass



Black-headed Gull (Photo: Tom Cuffe)

## Further information

### Lough Derg on the Shannon Heritage Trail (iphone and Android phone apps)



[www.itunes.apple.com/sv/app/lough-derg-heritage-trail/id647179890?l=en&mt=8](https://www.itunes.apple.com/sv/app/lough-derg-heritage-trail/id647179890?l=en&mt=8)



[www.play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.cyclingld&feature=search\\_result#?t=W251bGwsMSwxLDEsImNvbS5jeWNsaW5nbGQiXQ](https://www.play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.cyclingld&feature=search_result#?t=W251bGwsMSwxLDEsImNvbS5jeWNsaW5nbGQiXQ)

### Walking routes/ cycle ways/ driving routes/ kayak trail

[www.walks.iwai.ie/derg/](http://www.walks.iwai.ie/derg/)  
[www.clarewalks.com/east-clare-way-page.html](http://www.clarewalks.com/east-clare-way-page.html)  
[www.irishtrails.ie/trail/East-Clare-Way/16/](http://www.irishtrails.ie/trail/East-Clare-Way/16/)  
[www.everytrail.com/guide/east-clare-way](http://www.everytrail.com/guide/east-clare-way)  
[www.everytrail.com/guide/lough-derg-way](http://www.everytrail.com/guide/lough-derg-way)  
[www.everytrail.com/guide/lough-derg-cycleway](http://www.everytrail.com/guide/lough-derg-cycleway)  
[www.everytrail.com/guide/lough-derg-drive](http://www.everytrail.com/guide/lough-derg-drive)  
[www.walks.iwai.ie/derg/whitegate.shtml](http://www.walks.iwai.ie/derg/whitegate.shtml)  
[www.walks.iwai.ie/derg/rinnaman.shtml](http://www.walks.iwai.ie/derg/rinnaman.shtml)  
[www.everytrail.com/guide/lough-derg-canoe-trail](http://www.everytrail.com/guide/lough-derg-canoe-trail)  
[www.everytrail.com/guide/lough-derg-cruising-trail](http://www.everytrail.com/guide/lough-derg-cruising-trail)

## Woodland walks

[www.coillteoutdoors.ie](http://www.coillteoutdoors.ie)

[www.coillteoutdoors.ie/uploads/tx\\_r3coilltere creationsites/CastloughSiteMap.pdf](http://www.coillteoutdoors.ie/uploads/tx_r3coilltere creationsites/CastloughSiteMap.pdf)

[www.irishtrails.ie/Trail/Ballycuggaran-Crag-Wood-Walk](http://www.irishtrails.ie/Trail/Ballycuggaran-Crag-Wood-Walk)

[www.everytrail.com/guide/portumna-forest-park-woodland-trails](http://www.everytrail.com/guide/portumna-forest-park-woodland-trails)

## Wildlife

[www.npws.ie](http://www.npws.ie)

[www.birdwatchireland.ie](http://www.birdwatchireland.ie)

[www.butterflyconservation.ie](http://www.butterflyconservation.ie)

[www.irishwildflowers.net](http://www.irishwildflowers.net)

[www.irishwildlifetrust.ie](http://www.irishwildlifetrust.ie)

[www.treecouncil.ie](http://www.treecouncil.ie)

[www.fisheriesireland.ie](http://www.fisheriesireland.ie)

[www.heritagecouncil.ie](http://www.heritagecouncil.ie)

[www.loughderggardens.com](http://www.loughderggardens.com)

[www.irishseedsavers.ie](http://www.irishseedsavers.ie)

[www.goldeneagle.ie](http://www.goldeneagle.ie)

[www.mountshannoneagles.ie](http://www.mountshannoneagles.ie)

[www.facebook.com/mountshannoneagles](http://www.facebook.com/mountshannoneagles)

[www.celtnet.org](http://www.celtnet.org)

## Lough Derg tourism

[www.discoverireland.ie/lakelands](http://www.discoverireland.ie/lakelands)

[www.iwai.ie](http://www.iwai.ie)

[www.waterwaysireland.org](http://www.waterwaysireland.org)

## Identification guides

- Brooks, S. and Lewington, R. 2002. Field Guide to the Dragonflies and Damselflies of Great Britain and Ireland. Second Revised Edition, British Wildlife Publishing, Hook.
- Nelson, B. and Thompson, R. 2004. The Natural History of Ireland's Dragonflies. MAGNI Publication No 013, National Museums and Galleries of Northern Ireland, Belfast.
- Rose, F. 2006. The Wild Flower Key: How to identify wildflowers, trees and shrubs in Britain and Ireland. Frederik Warne.
- Sterry, P. 2010. Collins Complete Guide to Irish Wildlife. Collins. HarperCollins, London.
- Shackleton, J. and Nash, J. 2004. A Guide to the Butterflies of Ireland. The Dublin Naturalists' Field Club.
- Wilson, J. and Carmody, M. 2013. The Birds of Ireland: A Field Guide. The Collins Press, Cork.

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### **Natural Heritage Audit of Lough Derg**

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**Cover photograph:** White-tailed Sea Eagle over Lough Derg (Valerie O'Sullivan)