



# CRANN

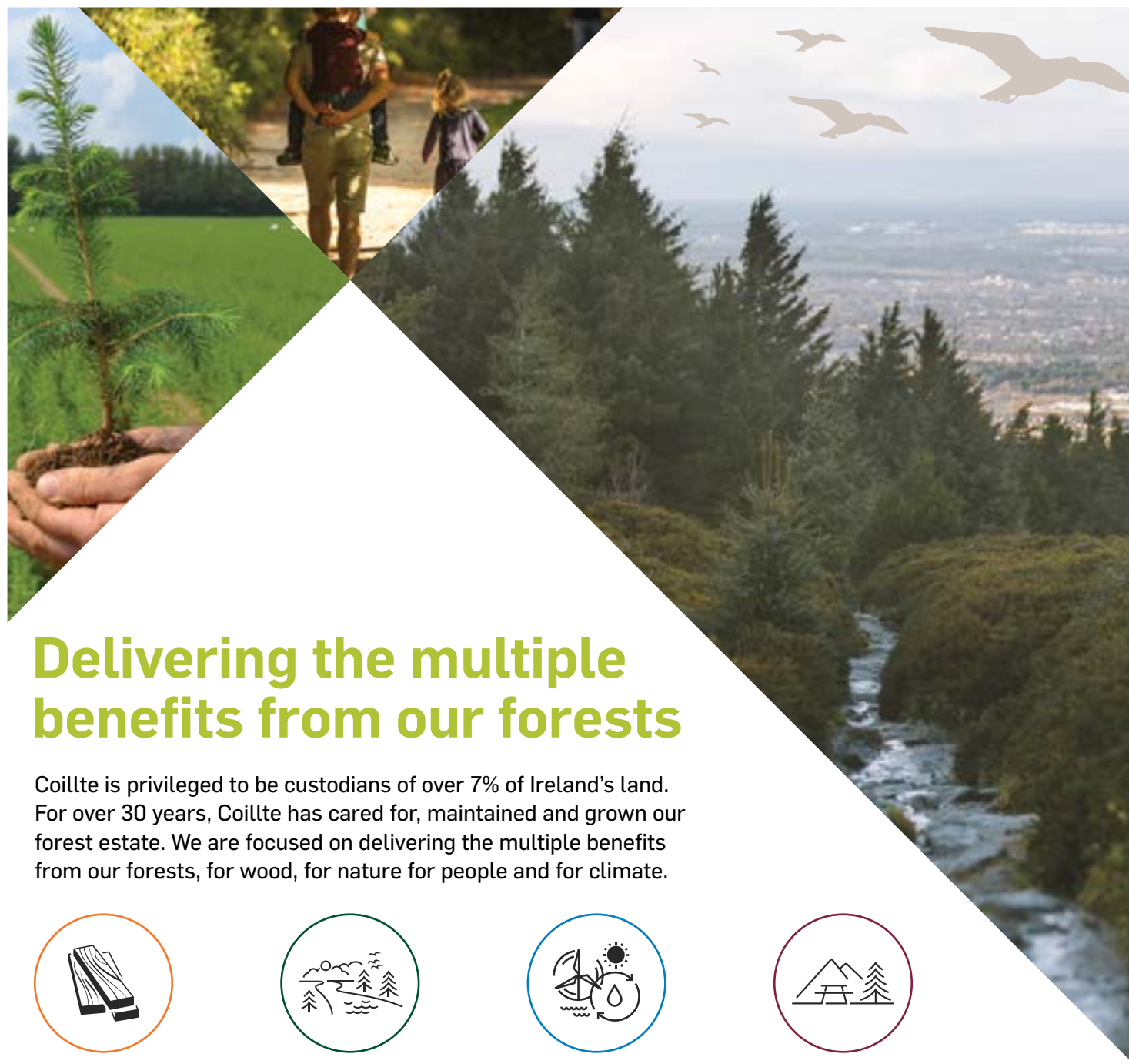
Ireland's tree magazine

AUTUMN/WINTER  
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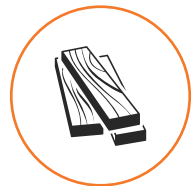






## Delivering the multiple benefits from our forests

Coillte is privileged to be custodians of over 7% of Ireland's land. For over 30 years, Coillte has cared for, maintained and grown our forest estate. We are focused on delivering the multiple benefits from our forests, for wood, for nature for people and for climate.



### Forests for Wood

Coillte is Ireland's largest producer of sustainably certified roundwood, the raw material that our sawmill and panel board customers process into high quality Irish timber products.

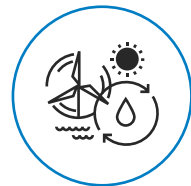
- In 2020, Coillte produced 2.3 million cubic metres of wood.
- Enough timber to build 50,000 homes.
- Trees are always replanted after harvesting to restart the forest cycle again.



### Forests for Nature

Forests are home to some of our most important wild plants, animals and habitats.

- We work with and respect nature across all our lands.
- Over 90,000 hectares of Coillte lands are managed for biodiversity and nature conservation.
- Coillte Nature is delivering new native woodlands, urban forest regeneration and habitat restoration projects of scale.



### Forests for Climate

Forests help reduce climate change effects by reducing the amount of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. Well managed forests have a triple carbon benefit.

- Trees act as a carbon sink, constantly removing carbon from the air as the tree grows.
- This carbon is then stored away in timber products when the mature tree is harvested.
- The timber products substitute other 'carbon heavy' products like concrete or steel.



### Forests for People

Coillte is the largest provider of outdoor recreation in Ireland.

- Over 3,000km of way marked walking trails to explore.
- 12 forest parks and 6 purpose built mountain bike trail centres.
- Over 250 recreational forests nationwide with mapped walking trails.

**COILLTE**  
GROW · TRANSFORM · SUSTAIN

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### COVER

A detail from 'Struggling to survive at Crotty's Lake,' submitted by Maureen Maher, Rascasse, Rathronan, Clonmel, Co Tipperary, for our annual photographic competition sponsored by Coillte (pgs 13-18). She comments: This leaning Sceach tree at Crotty's Lake, Comeragh Mountains, Co Waterford, is looking sideways at Slievenamon, way over in the heartland of Tipperary.

### PICTURE CREDITS

Paddy Smith, Peadar Collins, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Sean McGinnis, Jess Bolton, Máire McKay, Woodland Trust, Patrick Moran, Orla Farrell, George Cunningham, Fr Bavo Benedictus Samosir, Declan and Yvonne Foley, Piers McCann.

## A rare compliment came my way once, and I defy anyone to top this



NOT that the compliment itself was of a scarce nature. It's the style of the compliment that was simply remarkable. There I was in a field in Co Meath near Inchamore Bridge on the River Boyne, sitting on a bockedy old stool, nicely content with the world around me. The only thing bothering me was the threat of sunburn on my fair skin. I had a mission: to do a pencil drawing of the scene before me and to justify the fee I was going to be paid to do so. The money was not enough to tempt me to give up the day job, but was just enough for me to take it seriously. There was also the tempting prospect that it would give me some bragging rights in my own circle of friends. Little did I know it would bring me one of my most treasured memories.

On that day, I was going very well with the drawing and was quite pleased with myself when I heard a strange noise behind me. I swivelled on my stool and discovered I had an audience of a small group of five or six bovines. They were just standing there, chewing the cud and admiring my work of art.

I don't usually like an audience for my attempts at art but this was an exceptional situation and I don't mind admitting that I gloried in it. I turned back to my easel and waited to see how long the spectators would remain before their curiosity waned. The answer was: not long enough. And then they wandered off, leaving me alone with my creation.

Another hour or two passed while the little herd continued to graze the field and I continued to create my masterpiece. What kept me particularly focused was fulfilling the special request that there had to be a rowing boat moored on the river. There was, of course, no rowing boat to be seen that day so it had to be imagined by me. And take my word for it, drawing a boat is difficult enough at the best of times but drawing an imaginary boat and inserting it into a setting that looks natural is a challenge.

The cattle never returned from their wanderings but, thankfully, they also stayed away from my line of sight and didn't try and get themselves featured in the drawing. Neither did they return to inspect the finished product, which was disappointing. But I can guarantee that they wouldn't have seen a finer piece of art on that day.

*Paddy Smith*



@TreesForIreland



Crann – Trees for Ireland



cranntrees

**OUR MISSION:** To enhance the environment of Ireland through planting, promoting, protecting and increasing awareness about trees and woodlands.



**Letters & Articles to Editor:** To Crann Office as above. Crann Membership Unwaged/OAP €25, Individual €35, Family €45, Life €700, Corporate €100

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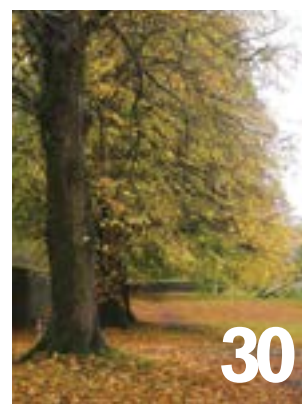
For more information, please visit [www.coillte.ie](http://www.coillte.ie)



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HELP! Ivy has taken over my ash plantation!

In the company of trees in the National Botanic Gardens for the AGM of Crann – Trees for Ireland, from left, Joan Whelan, Orla Farrell, incoming chairman Peadar Collins, Marie Louise O'Donnell, Diarmuid McAree, Marguerite Arbuthnot-O'Brien and PJ Fitzpatrick.



## An inventive year for everyone in Crann

**T**HE 2021 AGM of Crann – Trees for Ireland was held in the National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin, Dublin, on 2 October. An overview of our activities since the 2020 AGM was given in the Secretary's report, presented by Crann Administrator Marguerite Arbuthnot-O'Brien, as follows:

With the on/off closure of schools during the year, it became difficult to plan our environmental education visits to schools and Easy Treesie planting parties. However, we put the thinking caps on and became very inventive, both practically and virtually, linking up with other groups, e.g. participating in the RTÉ Education Hub programmes, all the time mindful of the Covid-19 guidelines.

**Crann Schools Programme.** The schools were

very innovative when it came to dealing with the Covid-19 fall-out. Virtual interaction with pupils became the norm and the sharing of outdoor activities with a twist.

Our Environmental Education expert, Dale Treadwell, added another string to his bow by conquering the planet Zoom! He was an online star sharing videos, live interaction with bug viewers and encouraging outdoor activities. He took to building education pods and sharing seed collection and planting ideas for online workshops and interaction.

One such school, Monkstown Educate Together, had an inspired 4th class who covered 7,080km (all within their 5k), representing the distance from their school to the mouth of the Amazon River. They raised funds for the benefit of Crann and the Rainforest Trust.

**The Crann/Easy Treesie Project** is a continuous rolling success, thanks to the wonder powers of its founder and coordinator Orla Farrell. We had our Patron President Michael D Higgins plant the 100,000th tree in

October 2020 and, following a hugely successful National Tree Week 2021, the 200,000th tree target was met. Huge thanks goes to Coillte and the Trees on the Land who supply the trees for this project. A more detailed report is carried on pgs 22-26 of this issue.

One of the highlights of National Tree Week 2021 was the coverage of the project by RTÉ's Nationwide programme which helped to raise awareness.

The project was delighted to be selected as one of 20 groups by the Rethink Ireland Innovate Together Fund, which not only meant an injection of funds but also strategic support.

The Project has partnered with the GAA Green Clubs initiative, who have committed to planting 45,000 trees with their communities nationwide.

The ET Project has continued to capture people's imagination via interactions during Culture

### OUR ANNUAL DRAW

Please note that due to the late production of this issue of the Magazine we have agreed to hold over our Annual Fundraising Draw until the spring/summer issue.

We wish to thank you all for your continued support, with special thanks to the sponsors of our prizes.

We shall issue a draw card in the next issue of Crann Magazine.

### CRANN Membership applications

Ireland was once entirely covered with woodland. It is now the least wooded country in Europe. CRANN is Ireland's leading tree organisation, uniting people with a love of trees. CRANN's mission is to enhance the environment of Ireland through planting, promoting, protecting and increasing awareness about trees and woodlands. CRANN is pursuing this mission through contributions to urban & rural planting projects, through its schools programme and through this magazine.

**Members receive:**

- A copy of CRANN magazine.
- Invitations to join with other members on a variety of woodland walks and talks.
- Access to advice and information about trees in Ireland.
- Most important of all, by joining CRANN you will be helping secure a future for Ireland's rich heritage of trees and woods.

Annual Membership rates:	Unwaged/DAPs	€25
Individual	€35	
Family	€45	
Life	€700	
Corporate	€100	

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Membership: \_\_\_\_\_

I enclose a chq/postal order for: € \_\_\_\_\_

Please send completed application form with payment to:  
CRANN, P.O. Box 860, Celbridge, Co. Kildare.  
Payment option: via PayPal [www.crann.ie](http://www.crann.ie)  
CRANN is an Irish non-profit organisation promoting and planting broadleaf trees.





Night, the TedX conference held 29/04/2021 and videos of children doing what they do best, having fun planting trees!

Orla has a wonderful team of volunteers and interns who have proved invaluable to the Project. We would be lost without them and we wish to record our appreciation for their generosity of spirit and enthusiasm that they bring to the organisation.

National Tree Week was a prime example of the efforts made by one and all. There was a massive roll out of saplings by Coillte to various community groups nationwide, who took responsibility for arranging Covid-safe tree planting events and sharing their photos recording the events.

Corporate activities are covered elsewhere in the magazine.

The entries received in the Crann Open Photographic Competition, sponsored by Coillte, increased as a result of people enjoying the outdoors and becoming more aware of the natural beauty on their doorsteps. We created another calendar for 2021, co-sponsored by the Forest Service, highlighting some of these entries. The feedback was wonderful and we intend to repeat the process for a 2022 calendar.

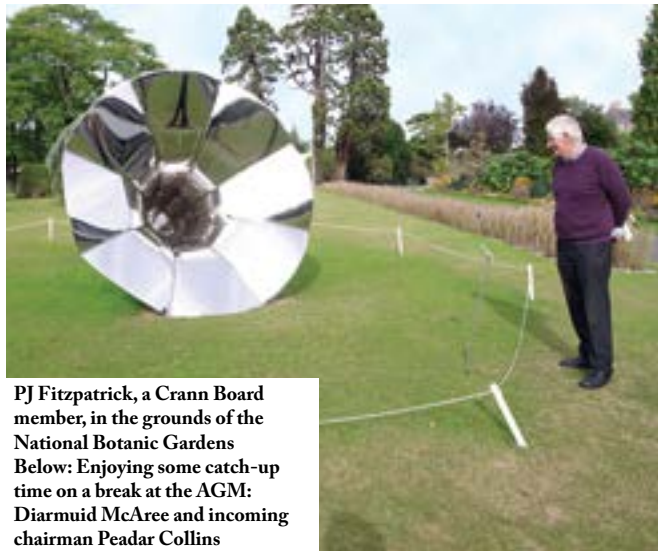
#### Giants Grove Project:

Phase II site preparation is on target, thanks to a specific donation received for that purpose. With the ongoing climate change issues, this project is most definitely becoming a conservation project as well as a tribute to Ireland's diaspora.

An imaginative sponsorship was received from Trinity Business School, who sponsored 18 trees for 18 Faculties. We look forward to organising ecotherapy forest walks for the staff and students in the coming months.

We had plans for an international conference/summit to take place in 2021, but with the Covid-19 restrictions, especially relating to travel, that had to be cancelled.

We thank one and all, including the county councils who



**PJ Fitzpatrick, a Crann Board member, in the grounds of the National Botanic Gardens**  
**Below: Enjoying some catch-up time on a break at the AGM: Diarmuid McAree and incoming chairman Peadar Collins**



facilitate a lot of the tree planting events and endorse our work and the individuals who contact us to lend a helping hand.

We welcome that the Irish Environmental Network (IEN) has continued to be supportive of the various member organisations during the Covid-19 restrictions.

Tidy Towns are covered separately in the magazine.

Now more than ever, we have meaningful objectives and we look forward to achieving them for the greater good of our environment – by making a difference with the planting of trees, raising awareness and educating our young adults of the future in a fun way.

#### Chairman's report:

Mark Wilkinson sent his Chairman's report to be read in his absence:

It is another unusual year to have to report on. Mark wanted to praise the wonderful work of everyone and the imaginative ways in which our objectives were achieved.

He thanked Paddy Smith,

Editor of Crann Magazine for the superb production that is Crann magazine. We are very fortunate to have it and our Members really appreciate receiving it as part of their membership. The calendar which featured some of the photo competition entries was a welcome addition to the autumn/winter issue.

Unfortunately, due to the rolling Covid situation, the schools, Easy Treesie and Tidy Towns programmes have been put under extra strain in order to come up with ways of getting the job done.

Our Brand continues to attract enquiries from the corporate organisations wanting to offset their carbon sins by way of donations, staff volunteering and sponsoring our schools and tree-planting projects.

We were pleased to have the opportunity to meet with Minister Pippa Hackett this year with a view to raising our concerns and ambitions for improving the current setbacks relating to forestry and tree planting legislation. We would welcome being a member of the Forest Policy Group with a view to offering positive and practical ideas for consideration by the Department.

Mark thanked everyone involved and especially the Board and Marguerite for supporting him in the role of chairman. He hopes that 2022 will be another positive year for the organisation and he sent good wishes to

everyone, especially during these Covid times.

#### Treasurer's Report:

The year-end accounts, were prepared by Duffy, Burke & Co, Galway, for discussion and approval by the Board at the preceding Board meeting and were then laid before the AGM.

Last year Diarmuid McAree asked our Accountant Gavan Duffy if he would recommend that we buy some prize bonds. Gavan stated "that some have done in the past. It would show as an asset on the balance sheet. Banks charge to have money with them, a prize bond might not gain but you won't lose it. As a charity there is nothing to preclude you, so long as you don't use grant money." Diarmuid proposed that we proceed with the purchase of prize bonds to the value of €5,000 Peadar Collins seconded, and all agreed.

**Election of Directors:** The formal election took place of our new Director, Jess Bolton, who was proposed by Diarmuid McAree and seconded by Peadar Collins. Diarmuid McAree said that due to Covid it had been difficult to meet with Jess. However, we shall endeavour to do so before year end.

The position of Chairman changed over from Mark Wilkinson to Peadar Collins. Mark, who was not present, sent his very best wishes to Peadar in taking over the reins.

A vote of thanks to Mark as outgoing Chairman was unanimously concurred.

**Any Other Business:** Orla Farrell thanked everyone for the support of the Easy Treesie project, saying that it had been outstanding and had grown fourfold. All the support of the Board and the membership has made it a dream project, with everyone so positive and willing to help. Orla asked everyone to help keep the project in the top search on social media by asking family members to share posts, e.g. if you cannot attend real events, please do it virtually.

# Message from our new chairman

**Happy 2022, Crann members, readers and tree lovers, from the board of Crann – Trees for Ireland.**

**C**an I, first of all, acknowledge and compliment the great efforts of the team at Crann, our kind members and sponsors, our board, project partners, enthusiastic and always driven by Marguerite and aided by Dale and Paddy, serving businesses and local authorities.

It's the beginning of a year; nothing much in the life of an oak but a lot for those who haven't been planting one. I've noticed in particular in the last decade (again, nothing in the life of an oak) that we are guided by fear, even when it comes to trees. There is a currency now in fear. We must save the planet with trees. Now, isn't that just great. But is it? I always knew trees made oxygen and processed carbon. It was always secondary to their primary presence, i.e. their beauty and value. Without mankind being inspired by these two qualities first, the whole buzzword sustainability will not function into the future.

Back around the time Crann was getting off the ground I was a budding and grafting young horticultural student, inspired by those great men, the Salesians at Warrenstown. Over the course of those three great years, I often got lost in the huge woods and boundary estate of Dunsany. This was just a flavour of what was to come. In my year out from Warrenstown, I was to live at Whetham cottage, on the grounds of Bowood, Wiltshire, in the heart of old England's Cotswolds. There I met a breed of individual I haven't met in Ireland: a woodsman. Self-explanatory, you would say, but have we any in Ireland? No. Do they have them in France, Germany, Ukraine, Switzerland, Poland, Russia, Czech Republic, England, Scotland and Wales? Yes. There's a very good reason we don't have them in Ireland; we don't really have an old tradition of trees here.

Since we took on the challenge of building modern Ireland the Irish way, of which we sure have done well, there is a noticeable lack



**Peadar Collins was elected chairman of Crann – Trees for Ireland at our AGM**

of tradition in trees. I have written about Doneraile Park in Cork, Hillsborough in Co Down, the wonderful Glenstal Abbey in Co Limerick, and how all these places harnessed the beauty and value of trees by way of tradition. Over 6,000 of these estates were

dotted around Ireland during this time. Back then, forestry wasn't up on poor high ground but down in the rich farmlands. Consider today's Ireland. Low lands are grass, denuded of trees; and the mountains, where nothing will grow well, are forest farms.

I know Governments are well-meaning and I do genuinely empathise with Ministers, but can we start all over again? There are land owners who genuinely love trees. They get it. The beauty and value. They will, out of genuine interest and creative commercial thinking, set the standard in a sustainable way. I do genuinely get where the Government stands on laws and licensing. There is money involved, grants, etc, to promote and the EU laws to comply with also. However, we now have a lot of law and little order and even less appetite to initiate forestry at local farm level, where the best trees will grow and the vast majority of people live to enjoy them.

Ireland is different to mainland Europe and eastern Europe and, indeed, England. We have the skeletons of English tradition with trees that I think we need to put meat on again. We certainly need conifer production for providing in the short term in the higher wet poorer soils. Long term, though, we need to champion a culture of tree tradition. I feel we are not achieving this because the people that own the vast majority of the footprint of Ireland are not enthused by regulation set by people who are not invested.

Mainland Europe and Eastern Europe and Russia are more vast, more government-controlled by ownership, and they just have a different dynamic.

If I'm right, in New Zealand a number of years ago they made a collective decision to get real with farming. Go back to basic survival commercial thinking and cut loose from restrictive subsidy thinking. I think this approach needs to dawn on Ireland's forestry. Invest in all the rungs of education from primary up through the agricultural colleges, where the next generation of forest owners will come from. For the most benefit, we need the farming community to evolve this tradition I talk about. This is 85% of the footprint of Ireland.

#### LATE NEWS

**Crann – Trees for Ireland are pleased to announce that Forest Europe – The Liaison Unit of The Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe has invited Crann Director Diarmuid McAree to join their Expert Group on Green Jobs. Diarmuid was a former Vice-Chairman of the UNECE/FAO Team of Specialists on Green Jobs in the Forest Sector which has now completed its mandate.**

**Further information:**

**[www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/timber/publications/DP71\\_WEB.pdf](http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/timber/publications/DP71_WEB.pdf)**





# The incredible carbon storage of our redwoods

By SEAN MCGINNIS

**T**HE JOINT Crann – Trees for Ireland and Birr Castle Giants Grove Project at Birr, Co Offaly, is the largest redwood forest outside of the US. Already in its fifth year, one thousand redwoods have been established among native broadleaves on previously bare ground. The project has a wide range of environmental benefits from protecting the sequoia species from the effects of climate change, to providing new diverse habitats for protected and endangered flora and fauna. However, the Grove's greatest benefit may be in its phenomenal ability to capture and store carbon: carbon sequestration.

## What is carbon sequestration?

The world's climate is changing; this last decade has been the hottest on record and the next will be even hotter as we continue to produce and burn fossil fuels on a massive scale. Carbon sequestration is one pillar of decarbonisation we can use to limit global warming in the long term. Trees absorb carbon from the atmosphere during photosynthesis as CO<sub>2</sub> and it is then stored as wood in their stem, roots and branches. Carbon generally makes up about 50% of the dry mass of wood and, as long as the tree is alive, that carbon is trapped and cannot return to the atmosphere.

## Redwood carbon storage

Giants Grove is home to both giant redwoods (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*) and coastal redwoods (*Sequoia sempervirens*), the largest and tallest tree species on Earth that take 1,200 years to reach maturity and can live up to 2,500 years. Different tree species store carbon at different rates, on different sites, but an average tree will typically sequester 1 tonne of carbon in its lifetime. However, coastal redwoods can sequester up to 250 tonnes of carbon, and giant redwoods can sequester even more – the carbon stored in the famous General Sherman giant redwood has been calculated at 392 metric tonnes!

## Giants Grove impact

Even using the UK Forestry Commissions conservative figures, the 1,000 redwoods in



Young giant redwood showing strong leader-growth, apical dominance and conical form. PHOTOGRAPHER: SEAN MCGINNIS

Giants Grove will store more carbon in their lifetimes than 250,000 average trees, and the main reason for this is their longevity. That is a truly amazing statistic and doesn't even account for the native Irish broadleaves growing among them. In just 100 years the redwoods at Giants Grove will store over 2,600 tonnes of carbon per hectare, and the 8 hectares at Birr Castle will sequester a whopping grand total of just under 21,000 tonnes of carbon from our atmosphere in that time.

And, remember, these giants take 1,200 years to reach maturity, and the total carbon sequestered during the grove's lifetime could be as high as 250,000 tonnes. That is an enormous amount of carbon to be absorbed from the atmosphere and safely stored away at Birr, Co Offaly, Ireland.

Carbon sequestration is a hot topic these

days, and rightly so. We all must do whatever we can to reduce our emissions and offset our carbon footprints. Forestry and afforestation is not the quick solution to climate change, but it can be a major part of the long-term solution. And if it's done right, afforestation will not only store carbon but will provide food, shelter and habitat for countless species, and provide a much-needed sanctuary from our hectic, stressful lives. Giants Grove takes so much carbon from our skies, and it gives so much more in return.

To learn more about Giants Grove or to sponsor a redwood, visit [giantsgrove.ie](http://giantsgrove.ie)

SEAN MCGINNIS, of Ecoplan Forestry, manages the Giants Grove site on behalf of Crann – Trees for Ireland and Giants Grove

## THE PROJECT

Giants Grove [www.giantsgrove.ie](http://www.giantsgrove.ie) at Birr Castle, a voluntary partnership between Birr Castle and Crann – Trees for Ireland, is planned as the largest grove of giant redwoods outside California, a mix of giant and coastal redwoods. These redwoods were native here before the Ice Age 3 million years ago.

Giants Grove is a symbol of Ireland's global concern for conservation, as climate change represents a threat to the long-term survival of redwoods in California.

The planting, maintenance and establishment of the 1,000 redwoods is being financed by you, the Giants Grove sponsors, dedicating trees to family and friends. Your tree will be associated with a GPS coordinate within the grove, identified on your certificate.

More information: [www.giantsgrove.ie](http://www.giantsgrove.ie) or email [info@giantsgrove.ie](mailto:info@giantsgrove.ie)

# New board member for Crann



**A** qualified solicitor in Ireland, and also in England/Wales, Jess Bolton currently works as a Legal Information Officer and Caseworker in the Independent Law Centre of the Immigrant Council of Ireland, an NGO which works to promote the rights of migrants in Ireland.

Before taking up her position with the Immigrant Council, Jess worked as a solicitor

in private practice in Dublin. Prior to this, she worked in London, variously representing victims of medical negligence and victims of domestic violence. She holds a history degree and a masters in the history of gender politics from the University of Oxford.

Having grown up in the Wicklow Mountains, Jess has a great love of trees and is thrilled to have been elected to the Board of Crann.

## Obituary: John Cronin, Ballyshannon, Co Donegal

IT IS with sadness that we have learned of the death earlier this year of John Cronin, one of the founder members of Crann. He was in his 94th year and is survived by his wife Breege.

He lived in Portnason, Ballyshannon, and was originally from Macroom, Co Cork.

John used to give talks in the schools,

spreading his enthusiasm and love of nature. He would contact local businesses to muster up prizes for our annual draw. Oftentimes he would phone us just to catch up on news and events. A lovely man, he had a true environmental spirit and he will be sadly missed.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam dílis.

## Apology

Our apologies to Matthew Jebb, Director of the National Botanic Gardens, for referring to him as Matthew Webb in the panel on Pg 9 of our Spring/Summer issue. Matthew Jebb good-humouredly responded: Not to worry, being equated with the great Dr Webb of TCD is never an insult!

Mary O'Riordan stands proudly in front of the variegated holly (*Ilex aquifolium* "Variegata") outside her home at Walnut Rise, Courtlands Estate, Griffith Avenue, Dublin 9. It was sculpted by her late husband, Andy, and is regarded as one of the finest tree sculptures in Dublin. Crann chairman Peadar Collins came across Mary and the tree on his travels and says it indicates the decades of love put into the shaping of this beautiful tree.



# When the Nightjar Returns

**F**OR OVER 30 years, John Feehan and St Brendan's Community School, Birr, have spearheaded the Killaun Bog Project – at first as a School Reserve and now as a wider community project involving a multitude of agencies to bring it to a new level: "The ambition to see the bog as a whole, conserved and managed in the long term as a place where people can go to experience an area of truly remarkable biodiversity."

A new boardwalk has been put in place and John Feehan's new book on the wider bog area, *When the Nightjar Returns*, magnificently illustrated, explores all aspects of its natural and human heritage.

Both were launched in the school in mid-November by former president Mary Robinson (she launched the first boardwalk in the early 1990s) at a restricted function. The A4, 185-page, all-colour volume is published at €20 and is available from the school. Rarely will one find a more comprehensive, innovative and readable study of a relatively small place.

Copies can be obtained from St Brendan's Community School Birr, phone (057) 9120510/9120511; email [info@stbrendansbirr.ie](mailto:info@stbrendansbirr.ie), €25 including postage.

GC





# Crann Editor's exclusive interview with Forestry Minister

**Note:** This interview took place towards the end of October but, due to unforeseen circumstances on the Crann side, publication was delayed until the end of February. However, at that stage the Minister's office took us up on our invitation to update the material.

## **PS You had an unusual education?**

PH Yes, I liked studying and being a student, I guess. I ended up with a PhD in equine biomechanics, of all things. Education is always valuable.

## **PS. What does that mean? Equine biomechanics?**

PH. It was to do with the mechanics of movement. It was based in the Department of Physical Education and Sports Sciences, and I looked at jumping horses and the effects of riders on jumping performance. I was always passionate about horses, and I did some showjumping when I was younger.

## **PS You met your future husband in Wales. Is he Irish?**

PH Yes, he's from Geashill, Co Offaly, farming there. We have suckler cows and sheep and a bit of forestry. We are organic farming for the last 8 years.

## **PS Why did you get involved with politics?**

PH I don't really know. I was never actively involved as a student or anything. I was

**Pippa Hackett is a native of Ballindine, Co Mayo. She studied Equine Science at the Welsh Agricultural College in Wales, and completed a BSc in Agriculture in Essex. She came home to study a post-graduate diploma in Equine Science at UCD, and graduated with a PhD in Sports Biomechanics from the University of Limerick in 2020. She is married to Mark, and they have 4 children aged 18 to 10. She took an extended career break after her second child. That was from UL.**

working in UL at the time so there was a lot of commuting involved, up and down every day. It was a fair old trek from the Midlands and when we had our second child, I decided not to go back, and we focussed on the farm. Then just before the 2016 general election I got my hands on a Green Party manifesto and I felt that it resonated with me.

At the time, there was a bit of a gap in my life, and I filled it with farming and



politics. I was active in the community too. Our neighbour is Christopher Fettes, who is the founder of the Green Party and is a really fascinating person. He has had, and is still having, such an interesting life. He has dined with famous people, met interesting people. He is passionate about nature, trees in particular, and plants trees all the time. I am very fortunate to live next door to him. He is a lovely man, has a lovely estate, and it's all covered in trees.

**PS Yes, I've met Christopher.**

PH I know. He graced the cover of your Crann magazine some years ago.

**PS Yes, a fascinating man. So, now you're in politics, having started off as a County Councillor and then a Senator and now Minister of State for Land Use and Biodiversity, or, to use the popular shorthand title, Minister for Forestry. What is your major 'to do list' for forestry into the future?**

PH It's quite extensive list, long. When I took office as Minister there was a massive big crisis in the timber sector over the issue of supply and planning appeals and licencing. We have been working our way through these issues. We have dealt with the backlog in appeals, compared to this time last year, which is great. One of the main aims now is to make forestry fit for purpose with regard to licencing. We are getting work done. We have changed things here in the Department, changed some ways we approach things. It's still not perfect and there is still a long way to go but we have turned a bit of a corner, which is good.

We are on the cusp of a new forest strategy for Ireland, and that excites me. In February last year, Minister (for Agriculture, Charlie) McConalogue and I announced Project Woodland, an initiative to tackle issues in forestry in Ireland, to drive forward the planting of trees, to create a new vision for forestry in Ireland and also to reform the licensing system.

Project Woodland had its first meeting last February and it is going well. We have a very diverse range of people involved which is really valuable. They are working really hard and they have gelled, I think, even though they have quite diverse views. It's difficult to keep everyone together, but so far so good.

Developing and delivering a new forest strategy is the next main thing to achieve: what we as a society and a nation want from our trees and forests for the next 50 or 100 years. And I am also driving through legislation which will allow for more small scale planting of native trees. We really need to up afforestation levels and I hope this legislation will help us devise ways to do that.

**PS As an aside to that, do you think that**

**the fact that you have forestry yourself was instrumental in you getting this job?**

PH I don't really know. I don't know if anyone really knew. I suppose if we are going to have a Green in the Department of Agriculture it helps that I am a farmer. I'm a bit of a rare specimen – the fact that I'm a Senator and not a TD. I am only the 3rd Senator to be appointed as a Minister, so it's a real honour for me. But I think that the fact that I do have forestry is useful to me because I have a knowledge of it and certainly my experience of being a farmer as well. Having an understanding of agricultural policy is incredibly useful because it's tricky enough if you have no knowledge of it. It would be very difficult to get a grasp.

**PS We're talking now, we hope, in the dying months of the Covid-19 pandemic. Would you consider proposing the establishment or renewal of a woodland as a National Covid-19 Commemorative Woodland?**

PH The options exist for people to establish woodlands. It's up to them if they want to identify them in particular ways.

**PS Up to who?**

PH Whoever establishes the woodland. I know for example there was a campaign to plant trees for nurses. I think that anything we can do to plant more trees, if it captures the public's imagination, is worth giving thought to, but there is nothing in the pipeline officially for that. We are going to have to engage with the public. In terms of climate action alone we are going to have to plant way more trees. We are well off our targets as things stand, so there is a lot of work to do.

**PS Would you consider appointing a Crann representative to the Forest Policy Group? Crann being a non-biased, non-judgmental entity with farmer and environmental members.**

PH When I set it up the Forestry Policy Group we gave careful consideration to who should be on it. We were trying to get a balance between the many views which are held on the issue so we invited a wide range of organisations, embracing the sector itself, the industry, the NGOs, state agencies, and representatives of farmers and landowners. So between our 24 or 25 members, I think we covered as much as we could.

I do welcome Crann's interest but we are established over a year now and I want to keep that cohesion. But there will be other opportunities for Crann to be involved. We would certainly like them to get involved as we develop this new vision of Irish forestry. We are going to have wide public consultation, so within that I would of course would welcome something from Crann.



**PS Would you re-introduce the Code of Best Forest Practice? [Ireland was the first in Europe to introduce such a code many years ago. It would need to be updated to take into account Sustainable Forest Management, SFM.]**

PH The Code of Best Forest Practice was published in 2000 and it served as a guide to ensuring that forest operations were carried out in a way that meets environmental, social and economic standards. Since then however the Department has changed many of its practices on afforestation, road building and harvesting, and for example has published detailed guidance on road construction and new environmental requirements for afforestation.

I think it is very important that we have a coherent set of clear standards for all forestry operations. That is probably more important than whether it is under one cover, as a 'Code' or in different documents depending on the particular activity. But Project Woodland Work Group 2 are examining the best way forward. One of their deliverables is to produce a Refreshed Irish Forest Standard and associated documents and I look forward to seeing what comes out of their work.

**PS How about NTBs (Non-Timber Benefits) such as amenity and eco-therapy aspects of forestry?**

PH The multi-functional benefits of forestry have to come to the fore. Anyone who enjoys a walk in the woods really feels the benefits of that. Forests are delivering an amenity benefit. They are there for so long that they are really part and parcel of areas and I know we have a very mixed and fragmented forest profile in Ireland. I think if we look at the way the Dublin mountains are being made over and changed from being very commercial to a native woodland with biodiversity and amenity the core objectives, this is a very positive initiative. These forests have become part of the city now and people go to them for amenity and peace. I think it's really important.

It would be lovely if every town and village had a woodland as part of the amenity of

**Suitably distanced: Minister Hackett was in her office in Dublin; Paddy Smith was in Kilkenny City**

living there. In my own little local town of Geashill there is a small little wooded area that you can walk through. It's a couple of acres. But it's mature and has all these lovely flowers in the spring. The school children do little projects in it and it's just lovely. It's not a big area but it would be lovely to see more of that. The appreciation that people have had over the past while with Covid certainly enhances that.

**PS The Green Prescription: complementary to traditional medicine (tablets). Do you have a view on it?**

PH I'm a big supporter of physical activity, full stop. I think it's hugely important for everyone, kids and adults, for both body and mind. Anything that gets people out and about, even if it's just a walk in the woods is hugely beneficial and I think people have more appreciation of that now again after being cooped up last year. I think it is just invaluable. Anything that gets people out and about is good.

**PS We are beginning to hear a bit about doctors deciding not to prescribe tablets. They hit the headlines when a doctor decided to write a prescription that said: "Get out for fresh air!"**

PH And go for a walk!

**PS Exactly, yes!**

PH But on the whole we would do better as a society if we were more active and got out and about more. And had more appreciation of the natural world around us.

**PS Knocksink Wood, near Enniskerry, Co Wicklow, is closed at present. We in Crann would be delighted to get involved in promoting this centre, in conjunction with Nádúr, which advocates woods/forestry as an antidote to stress. Have you a view on this?**

PH I looked into this and I understand that Knock Wood is looked after by the NPWS. It's not a Coillte wood. I don't know how many public woods there are. I recognise

the situation there and I'm familiar with it and I know there is a national environmental education centre and that has been closed as well. I certainly think it's something to be looked into. It's probably best that Crann engage with Darragh O'Brien, the Minister covering Heritage, and Minister Noonan as Minister who is overseeing the NPWS. I would be happy to contact Minister Noonan and see what can be done. I certainly will if you want.

**PS Licensing for timber felling. Do you accept that there is a problem here? Do environmentalists have a disproportionate influence on this issue? Are your hands tied by the extreme elements on the Green side? Affecting the availability of timber for housing. Also endangering our existing trees by importing disease in foreign timber. Is it not ridiculous to be importing timber from Scotland when we have enough standing timber as it is?**

PH There is a huge problem but it isn't as big as it was when I came into office. It's better. It's still a problem and my people are caught up with it to their frustration and I absolutely sympathise with anyone waiting a long time for licenses. We are expecting people to plant trees and we want to support them to do it and they cannot or they cannot get them felled or thinned so total sympathy with their situation. I have been contacted by a lot of people and not just anger, it's upset and it's frustration that they cannot have a licence. They see their trees bending over when they should not be.

It's very unfortunate but we have made improvements, we have invested additional resources. We have 26 ecologists now assessing these licences; 18 months ago, there were about two. So we have really ramped up that. And it has helped because ultimately we do have to have a fit-for-purpose licence system and given the challenges that lie ahead in terms of afforestation it really has to work. We have also undertaken an independent regulatory review to see if there are better and more efficient ways of doing things, and I

expect to get the results of it shortly.

**PS In Germany they're planting Mediterranean species of trees in anticipation of climate change. Your views on this? [What's the problem if they are the right tree in the right place, a fundamental element of Crann policy?]**

PH It's an interesting thought and certainly any new forestry programme will have to have an emphasis on diversity whether we are adapting or mitigating climate change we have to be cognisant of that. And a big issue in relation to that is disease. We are more prone to diseases because of a change in climate. We have to factor that in. I know COFORD do work in that regard as well. They do look at resilience in our forestry species. Diversity opens the door to a slightly different forestry model than we have had. Which in one sense excites me that we could have a very resilient multi-functional mixed species model in the future.

**PS The EU Green Deal. Is it accepted in Ireland that trees can play a significant long-term role in meeting environmental targets? And that there will need to be a mix of tree species in order to fulfil this deal?**

PH It's very much accepted now. We have a Climate Action Plan and it points to the need to plant more trees. It has a target of planting 8,000 ha a year while we have only managed to plant about 2½ thousand a year for the past couple of years. So we are well under that target, a target which I expect to be increased further in the next climate action plan. So we have a big challenge ahead. Not only do we need a societal-wide buy-in, we need land-owners and farmers to come on board. But I think if we get the model right, tree-planting should be enticing. It should not be seen as a negative, it should be very much a positive thing. If we can fit that in with that whole multifunctional view of forests, then we will be in a good space.

**PS Tell us about your own woodland/forest?**

PH We have about 13 ac, with one plot of 10 acres and that has Norway spruce in it. We're in the midlands and we get these early frosts and the other spruces wouldn't work so well. We also have another piece of about 3 acres of oak, birch and alder mix and they are about 8 years old at this stage. And they're great. They're not a massive area but it's exciting to see it developing and growing.

I know there is a somewhat negative view among some people in relation to spruce plantations, but I think we have to accept that some of them are there and are going to be there for a while. What we need to do is think about how best to manage them and perhaps too about how we think



about planting those types of forests in a different way. Continuous cover for example is something I would love to look into and certainly am considering whether I would do it with our own plantation or not. I understand that when they get to a certain age you can't really convert a similar age species to a continuous cover approach very easily. There is a time and place to do it.

But yeah, it's exciting to have a bit of forestry. It's in two pieces. Actually it's interesting. The Norway Spruce and birch is in one section and the other section is quite a bit away. It is more broadleaf stuff, the more native species. There is a hill in this field and it was too dangerous for the tractor or awkward for the animals to get up. We planted that, and it's quite nice. I like to think that in 50 or 100 years' time there will be a nice little habitat there. It's not massive but it's on good enough ground so they should grow well. I like to think there is a legacy of woodland on our farm. It's not done for the commercial side of things.

**PS How old is the oldest bit of it?**

PH I think maybe 8 or 9 years. It's not a massive part of our farm, but it's important. We have cattle and sheep too, and it's just a nice mix. I would love to try some agro forestry at some stage too, where you run animals through the trees in a combination, a silviculture type of approach, but we haven't done that yet. It might be the next thing to do.

**PS Have you a favourite tree? [Favourite as a species and as an individual tree in some favourite spot?]**

PH I'll deal with the second bit first. I have a favourite tree in my neighbour's place, Christopher Fettes. He has some really old trees. They could be 200-300 years old, if not older, and they are just magnificent. The huge girth of their trunks and big gnarly bark. They're just fantastic – and what they must have witnessed over the years. Generally favourite trees? I don't really know. Everyone likes the oak. I do too. I don't know. I will have to come back to that one. I want to give that a bit of thought. We have lots of trees on our own farm aside from the plantation, in our garden and other parts of the farm. Native trees, anyway. I'm a big fan of any kind of native tree. I quite like mountain ash; the berries are lovely. And I like birch too. Take mountain ash for now. It's lovely in November when the berries are out.

**PS The United Nations has a recent (in the last few years) publication on green jobs in the forestry sector? Is this important in our future planning for forestry in Ireland?**

PH I'm not familiar with that publication but certainly if we are going to embrace



Crann Editor Paddy Smith in action

forestry in the way we intend to we are going to have to have skills to manage it. And we are going to have to have capacity if we want to build more timber houses. The number of timber-framed homes here compared to Scotland is tiny. We are really trying to make a move away from steel and concrete and very high carbon products. Timber actually stores carbon that it extracts from the atmosphere as it's growing. So that's green jobs as well, isn't it? Different timber products are going to be more important as well. We see multi-storey buildings in Scandinavian countries, all made out of timber. We haven't ventured that far yet. The scope is vast. I will look up that report.

**PS Does the EU principle of subsidiarity have relevance to forestry in Ireland?**

PH The aim of subsidiarity is to allow member states to take decisions based on their own circumstances. It gives them autonomy. So, for instance, in Ireland we comply with state aid rules and with EU environmental requirements in all those directives. In terms of a new forestry programme we do have a certain autonomy to develop a programme which meets our particular needs in our society. Actually, the forestry programme we have and have had for a while is Exchequer funded. It's 100% Exchequer-funded, so it's not from the EU.

**PS DAFM. The 'F' is for Food, not Forestry. Does forestry need to be a separate Department in government? [In the past, Forestry was known as the Itinerant Forest Service]**

PH Yeah, and was forestry once in it?

**PS Yes, it was.**

PH Unfortunately we just have to make do with a separate Minister of State with responsibility for it for the moment. But everyone knows forestry is going to become more important in the years ahead and it's going to be significant to our climate action

programme. The Dáil declared a biodiversity crisis a couple of years ago and some have said, probably correctly, that we were not acting terribly quickly on that. But given their capacity to sequester carbon, trees are going to be very important regardless of whether forestry is in the Department's title or not. Getting the attention it needs is the main thing for forestry. So you just have to make do with your Minister of State for Forestry! (Chuckles)

**PS That's a nice line: as long as it gets the attention that it needs.**

PH Yeah. I think it is important, that Yeah.

**PS I have heard it said that in the past forestry was known as the itinerant Forest Service because it used to be shifted around so much.**

PH All that matters is getting it right and getting farmers on board. There is a cultural shift needed among many farmers and landowners in relation to forestry. There is a negative feeling which I think is wrong. We can address that so that forestry can be seen as part of farming and not either-or. It shouldn't be just either forestry or farming. I had an interesting conversation with the Ambassador of Finland a few months ago. Forestry plays a huge part of their land use. You are not considered a farmer unless you have forestry. We have a way to go to get to that.

**PS What would you say will be your contribution to Irish forestry? This is a terrible question to be asking you!**

PH So it can be quoted back to me again in 5 years' time! (Chuckles) I would like to think that my contribution will be to bridge the gap in the divide in farming and build that consensus that we need to embrace it in all its glory and that whole multi-financial piece. I would like to think that if we get the forest strategy right that I will have helped to start that.

# Shazia rambles her way to first prize

By PADDY SMITH

IT'S a simple recipe, really. When you go out walking, bring the camera with you! And the winner of this year's Crann/Coilte Photographic Competition goes out walking a lot. Cork-born Shazia Waheed likes nothing better, and she particularly loves wandering among trees.

It was on her first visit to the Coillte-owned Castlefreke Woods, near Rosscarbery, Co Cork, that she came across the intriguing beech tree that won her the top prize in our competition. Castlefreke is described as a "suite" of small woodlands, all linked by a number of trails. It is ecologically rich with a range of habitats, including wet woodlands, coastal marine sites and old woodland.

"It is one of the nicest woods I have been to," she said. "It's full of wildlife – I saw a lizard there, which you wouldn't see very often, and I've come across numerous damselflies – there's a great mix of habitats. The scenery changes as you walk along, and it has also got spectacular views of Long Strand and the whole Atlantic coastline."

All of these elements are perfect for a person who studied zoology and marine biology in University College Cork. "A lot of my hobbies revolve about being outdoors," she said. "I go snorkelling. I love the outdoors. The woods saved me during the lockdown when the weather was so good."

And, of course, there's photography.

"I'm always on the lookout for different animals. I submit a lot of records to the



National Biodiversity Data Centre, based in Carriganore, Co Waterford, the centre for recording where living things are found."

As if she hasn't enough to be doing she took up another hobby this year: moth trapping. "You have to get a licence to do this, but it's a really interesting hobby. There is a huge diversity of moths: over 1,300 species in Ireland, many with lovely colours, shapes and patterns. I've trapped up to 60 species in a single night at the height of summer, and that was just in the back garden with a home-made trap."

Shazia and her boyfriend, Cormac, go to different places all the time, exploring new areas. They met in college, where he was studying ecology, and they were together in Castlefreke the day that she took the prizewinning photo.

"It was a really lovely sunny day, that day," she recalls. "It was colourful – that's what I remember about it. There weren't many old trees to be seen; most of the trees around

us were younger. And this one caught my attention straight away. I'm guessing it's at least 100 years old, or it could even be 200 years old. I have over a dozen pictures of it, I maybe took 20 or more before I selected the ones that I wanted to keep. Cormac told me to stop taking photos, that I had enough!"

It was Cormac who bought Shazia her camera, as a Christmas gift seven years ago, and she brings it everywhere. It's a Panasonic Lumix, which she describes as a 'bridge' type of camera where you don't have to be swapping lenses, and it bridges the gap between a basic digital camera and a full-blown professional model. For Shazia it's a step closer to a professional camera and it has a really good zoom.

It is no surprise that Shazia has a second camera, for taking underwater photos when she is snorkelling. This Nikon Coolpix comes in handy sometimes in her job as a science outreach officer with the Lifetime Lab science education centre in the old Victorian waterworks along the River Lee, run by Cork City Council. She also uses it to shoot videos of underwater life for showing to primary schoolchildren in school outreach programmes and at workshops. In the summer, during school holidays, she becomes a tour guide at the Old Cork Waterworks Experience museum.

Shazia lives in Banduff, near Glanmire. Her father is from Pakistan, which explains her exotic name. She has been a frequent entrant to our photographic competition – and we expect to hear a lot more from her in the future. Congratulations, Shazia!

WE ARE delighted with this year's entry: a total of 75 (68 in the main category, 17 in the phone section). The quality was excellent, as usual, with particularly strong phone entries.

Good adherence to the theme made for easier judging.

The best suggestion is to "Snap a good one" whenever you see it. Mobile phones are very good for this as they have quite good cameras now.

A few tips on their use.

## JUDGES' OVERALL COMMENT

1 Set the image size to maximum.

2 Make sure the lens is clean, spit and a hanky or tissue if you are in the field/forest (spit & polish).

3 Take a few photographs and try to use different composites.

4 Most phone cameras will focus on the spot where you touch the screen, this will also set the aperture.

5 Take at least one of each,

portrait and landscape composites. Portrait is when you hold the phone upright and landscape is when the phone is held horizontal. Finally take lots and send us the best.

All photographers are asked to be careful about using computer editing software before submitting photographs, as it is best to let us do that when we print the images

in the magazine or calendar.

Remember, if you think your photo is good enough for the front cover of Crann magazine, then it's best to take it in portrait mode. Images for the calendar must be taken in landscape mode.

You have a better chance of getting into the calendar as we need 13 photographs, but only 1 for the front cover.

Finally, keep on clicking and good luck!



1st Prize €250  
**ENDURANCE**  
Photographer: **Shazia Waheed**  
5 Lotamore Crescent,  
Banduff, Cork  
Location: Castlefreke  
Woods, Co Cork  
Taken: 08 May 2021  
JUDGES' COMMENT:  
What a tangled web  
we weave . . . What an  
amazing shot, with so  
much to fill your eye.  
This photograph is well  
composed and in crisp  
focus with bluebells and  
ferns in the foreground.  
Strong dark colours set  
the scene combined  
with crazy shapes,  
making the best of the  
composure, a well-  
deserved winner.



The 2021 Crann/Coilte  
Photographic Competition is  
sponsored by Coillte, Ireland's  
largest commercial forestry  
and land solutions company.



**Judges:**  
Mark Wilkinson, LIPF  
Marie Louise O'Donnell



2nd Prize €100  
**BEECHES IN THE SNOW**  
Photographer: **Deirdre Gaffney**  
Ard na Mara, Malahide, Co Dublin  
Location: Ard na Mara, Malahide  
Taken: Jan 24 2021  
JUDGES' COMMENT:  
A lovely winter scene with majestic beeches and a bright winter sky. I like the fact that the photographer took the picture in a different season and kept this well composed photograph for the Crann photo competition. Beech trees are excellent for frost sticking to their fine twigs, which is well captured here. Well done!



HIGHLY  
COMMENDED  
**PINEISLAND**  
**Bried Collins**  
Milltown lane,  
Ashford, Co  
Wicklow  
Location:  
Derryclare  
Lough, Clifden to  
Maam Cross road  
Taken: 12  
September 2020



3rd Prize €50  
**AUTUMN COLOUR**  
Photographer: **Maureen Maher**  
Rascasse, Rathronan,  
Clonmel, Co Tipperary  
Location: Gurteen Woods,  
Kilsheelan, near Clonmel,  
Co Tipperary  
Taken: 31 Oct 2020  
JUDGES' COMMENT:  
This daring photograph  
with backlighting shows  
up the translucent leaves in  
their pastel autumn shades  
contrasting with the dark  
tree trunks. A good one!

HIGHLY COMMENDED  
**FOREST REFLECTION**  
**Joan O'Neill**  
Deerpark, Sixmilebridge, Co Clare  
Location: Dromore Wood, Co Clare  
Taken: 30 December 2020



PHONE COMPETITION



**WINTER TREES AT ST ENDA'S PARK**  
Photographer: **Susanna Braswell**  
3 Church Gate, Station Road, Wicklow Town, Co Wicklow A67 F850  
Location: St Enda's Park, Rathfarnham, Dublin  
Taken: 4 November 2017  
JUDGES' COMMENT:  
Winter is coming . . . A lovely autumn shot, blue sky and skeletal trees. A timely shot showing up the season in all its glory. Well done.

**1ST PRIZE €50**  
**AUTUMN AT MOUNT USHER GARDENS**  
Photographer: **Susanna Braswell**  
3 Church Gate, Station Road, Wicklow Town, Co Wicklow A67 F850  
Location: Mount Usher Gardens, Ashford, Co Wicklow  
Taken: 2 November 2016  
JUDGES' COMMENT:  
I loved this photograph, the composure, the water and above all the colours. The crisp focus to the fore and softer to the rear is very clever use of the depth of field. Wonderful colour saturation throughout. The ability to see a good photograph in your mind's eye and then capture it is what makes an excellent photographer, a worthy winner.

Tullamore member wins our quiz

**M**ÁIRE McKay is still buzzing when I ring her to hear her reaction to winning our quiz and the prize of a set of facsimile eight-volume Trees of Great Britain and Ireland (2012).  
Now Irish, of Scots and English descent, Máire McKay describes herself as a celtic dendrophile.  
A teacher by profession, she worked in several countries before

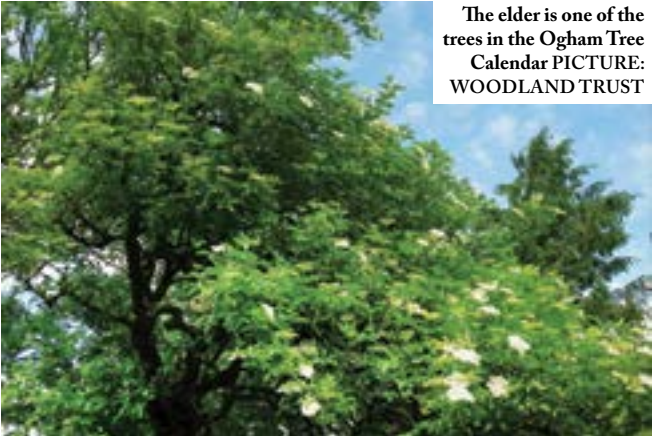


she and her Bolivia-born husband came to live in Tullamore in 1983. Among the languages they speak at home are Scots Gaelic and Esperanto. Their three grown-up sons each speak five or more languages. Their son Somhairle,

Máire McKay, winner of the eight-volume Trees of Great Britain and Ireland (2012) offered by the Society of Irish Foresters as the prize in our quiz. Her name was the first drawn from the correct entries submitted by 1 July 2021.  
who was living in Poland, was so stimulated by the Poles asking why the Irish don't (all) speak Irish, that he came back to Ireland, learnt Irish and took a diploma in it.  
Máire was around at the start of Crann in 1986 and remembers

Crann co-founder Jan Alexander. With an abiding interest in trees all her life, she has been a member of Crann since the early days. "We have more than 100 different types of trees in our garden."  
She says the set of facsimile eight-volume Trees of Great Britain and Ireland (2012) is a great prize. Referring to its size, she adds: "I hope I live long enough to read it!"  
**By Paddy Smith**

- ANSWERS**  
The correct answers are in **Bold**.
- 1. What is the odd man out: Oak, Ash, Yew, Horsechestnut, Holly, Alder, Birch, Juniper. **Horsechestnut.**
  - 2. True or False: Elder and Hazel form part of the Ogham Tree Calendar. **True**
  - 3. Who is supposed to have said that he dreaded more the sound of an axe in an oak grove than all the fears of death and hell. **St Colmcille**
  - 4. Who wrote the celebrated article, The Sacred Trees of Ireland. **A.T. (Tony or Anthony) Lucas**
  - 5. Give the meaning of Newry, **An tIúr**; Killakee, **Wood of the Blind Man**; Sallins, **The Willows**; Fethard, **High Wood**; Glenbeigh, **Glen/valley of the birches**.
  - 6. What have the Ginkgo and the Dawn Redwood in common. **Both thought to be extinct**
  - 7. Give the common or English name for: quercus, **oak**; betula, **birch**; ilex, **holly**; acer, **maple**; alnus, **alder**; sambucus, **elder**; fagus, **beech**; fraxinus, **ash**; salix, **willow**.
  - 8. Where and what species is the famous autograph tree. **Coole Park, Gort, copper beech.**



**Gort, copper beech.**  
9. What poet wrote: ....the house of the planter is known by its trees. **Austin Clarke.**  
10. Which of these trees is not a 'Noble of the Woods' in the early Irish Tree List: Oak, Hazel, Holly, Yew, Apple, Pine, Birch and Ash. **Birch.**

Our thanks go to Crann Director George Cunningham for organising this competition and setting the questions.



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# A NOVEL WAY TO OFFSET CARBON EMISSIONS

**You can put off learning the piano, writes EMMA REEVES, but you can't put off saving the world**

**I** OFTEN feel that the efforts I go to in reducing my carbon emissions are nothing but a spit in the ocean. Yip, I am a millennial! I'm not going to list the changes I've made; that would seem pious and arrogant. You'll find them all on Pinterest anyway. Let's just say I'm a step away from introducing 'family cloths' to the household. It's a thing.

It's not that I lose sleep over climate change. I do worry that we are running out of time and it does factor in pretty much all of my decision-making processes. There are so many positive changes the individual can make that can reduce carbon emissions. It's all worth it. I think the premise of climate change has been accepted by most but should the individual alone be responsible for reducing greenhouse gas emissions?

Certain industries are becoming more aware of how their operations affect the climate. They know, we know, what they're

**Dr Emma Reeves, who lives near Navan, has a PhD in botany from UCD**



up to, and we demand carbon reductions in supply chains, operations, products and post-shelf lifecycle of products/services. Unfortunately, the corporate knee jerk reaction is to promise big to maintain the economic status quo and to capture the ever-increasing climate-conscious section of the market. Shampoo bars in paper packaging is awesome but not when the main ingredient is unsustainable, habitat-destroying palm oil.

Net Zero promises by 2050 is a favourite of the corporate giant. Aspirations are wonderful things, but 2050? Transformational change on that timescale is laughable. I plan on learning

how to play the piano by the time I'm 40. I'm running out of time (that's only a year away). Maybe I should give myself another 30 years?

Genuine climate objectives are to be applauded but fanciful far-off, unrealistic goals aren't fooling anyone. Advertisements at the moment are flooded with soothing images of tractors traversing massive green fields, not my ideal habitat but it may appeal to some. Putting climate action on the long finger employing green marketing campaigns should not be acceptable for Irish companies.

I don't want to come across as some sort of sycophantic company-man but I think examples of good climate practice are necessary to elicit change. Also, I want to swing this article to the topic of trees which, as readers of Crann, you are most interested in.

I work for Forest, Environment, Research and Services Ltd (FERS). We are a small enterprise which specialises in

forestry services, and environmental impact assessment. As an environmental business, a green agenda and image is important to us. This was achieved through financial investment. Measures have been employed to reduce our greenhouse gases (GHGs) such as encouraging employees to work from home, production of digital reports thereby eliminating paper waste, no unnecessary foreign travel and the installation of a 3Kw Pv array with 10Kw storage on our office near Navan. Fieldwork is and will be part of our work in the future, travel is inevitable, an electric fleet is the next step on the path to reducing emissions.

The company still produces a fair amount of GHGs at present (despite my greenwashing) and has decided to offset these emissions. Offsetting allows instant carbon-guilt amelioration in that time period where Tesla Model S ownership is out of reach. FERS bought a small wood in County

Westmeath. There are tax benefits to such a venture as well as easing the carbon-conscious minds of the Directors. The woodland is available to all the staff and it is the goal to manage it in the most gentle manner through continuous cover forestry. Biodiversity has been assessed by our more than qualified staff (Ciaran Byrne, experienced botanist and flesh fly enthusiast) and my daughter (see picture below, initially misidentified as a hornet and accompanied by excited hysterics). Forest health and management are well in hand under the supervision of the bosses, Dr Pat Moran and Dr Kevin Black. The FERS wood will remain a wood in perpetuity, always capturing carbon and sequestering it away to make up for our carbon-infused lives.

One outcome of acquiring the wood was completely unexpected: being around trees and woods is good for our minds and souls.

**Pictures: PATRICK MORAN**

The flesh fly. Just look at the ovipositor on her!



A nice sunset at the FERS wood. You can see newly planted natives in the middle ground.





Tidy Towns community planting in Balrothery, Fingal, Co Dublin

# A hundred thousand welcomes to our newest hundred thousand trees

By ORLA FARRELL

**I** ALWAYS love writing up the parade of our glorious adventures of the last six months. Only, the phone is hopping all day today with typical amazing news. This morning alone RTÉ News want to come and film us planting an orchard in Scoil Mhuire Tullamore, with the Refugee Council and the Museum of Everyone. The *Sunday Independent Life* magazine want an interview for a piece called 'Small but mighty' about green ideas making a big change. I've been able to connect a student group with the ex-tree-ordinary 'Speedie' Smith and his Terryland Forest project in Galway who planted 2,000 saplings for our joint Science Week project at his city forest. Set up a planting day in the New Year with an Educate Together Parents' Committee in North Dublin with their teacher. Worked on the Rethink Ireland final report due next week. Spoke to a teacher and his 17-year old pupil about how much his agriculture-horticulture pupils have enjoyed our project. Plan a team site visit to Swords Manor Park.

So, never a dull moment in the Tree House – and it's not even coffee time.

## So What's Been Happening?

- Our sell-out Earth Day TEDxCrannTreesforIreland Climate Conference! Having run four Plant-for-the-Planet Tree Academies for children, we thought it time to offer a climate conference to the adults. We've found we are spending a lot of time advocating for trees and begging for space for nature. And what better way to spread the news of their central importance to solving all of our problems – well, most – than running a Virtual Conference? We



## Being There

Bee, Crafted, by Jade O'Reilly, age 14, Enfield, Co Meath, winner of the Greenore Tidy Towns and Residents' Association biodiversity project schools' competition for a logo for their great Nature Based Solutions #GenerationRestoration project. They are planting trees in Greenore to clean the air, to compensate for trees downed in storms, transferring window-box perennials into the lanes after each season, etc.

also ran a series of TEDCircles, as *Gaeilge san áireamh* and watch-parties. In a year without many invitations, we sent out lots, to join in making our dream of re-leafing the world and especially home come true. Our talented team of young volunteers managed our major event, with 19-year old Canqi Li of Brown University, USA co-ordinating the TEDxCountdown morning all the way from Budapest!

- Our distanced Jerusalem Challenge Dance video, which featured a giant white dancing rabbit wielding a planting spade, had over 1,000 views in its first week!
- Want to take action on climate? Learn how our Crann – Trees for Ireland director Diarmuid McAree mobilised his neighbours to plant 'Trees for All' for the residents of Shankill; or how Crann Director Joan Whelan started the first Forest Schools Project in Ireland.
- Pick a small tree to plant in your garden with Sarah Blake of Earthology.
- Join our call to #stoptalkingstartplanting

and learn from Gerhardt Gallagher how Ireland has space for a billion trees and nothing to stop us planting them but the will to do so.

- Hear Éanna Ni Lamhna's idea, 'One Thing for Nature' and take a walk in Ballyseedy wood with Tom Houlihan of Teagasc.
- In May, flush with our success, we answered the call of the Irish Environmental Network (IEN) to run our popular talks for Biodiversity Week series hosted by Crann Chairman Mark Wilkinson and our stalwart educator Diarmuid McAree with contributing guests.
- June brought World Environment Day – Crann's birthday – cue a tree planting ceremony on the shores of Carlingford Lough to mark the occasion.
- Summertime saw us hosting a tour around the historic trees of Greenore with veteran tree planter and expert Don Brasil as we launched two specially-commissioned films.
- We featured in the Culture Night Dublin Programme for the fourth year in a row and what a superb evening of art and poetry we



enjoyed from the comfort of our homes with our poet-in-residence Anto Kerins and a new collaboration with artist and author of *The Self-Care Squad*, Amy Claire.

- We've had discussions with Macra na Feirme, Foróige and the ICA, and are involved with several Rotary Ireland projects.

- It was also really exciting to team up with Laudato Si for the Season of Creation Planting initiative earlier this year; thanks so much to Trocaire for spreading the love of trees and mobilising every parish to plant trees on church lands, inspired by Pope Francis's call to action <https://tinyurl.com/th7ysb9r>.

And the result of all this action is the Easy Treesie – Crann Project planting 100,000 trees in just one year!

How did we do that? 100 per cent growth on last year's National Tree Day count when we presented our 100,000th sapling after four years of mass planting parties to our Crann Patron, President Michael D Higgins. What is going on, given that we were for a second year in the grip of so many Covid-19 restrictions?

200,000 trees planted; that was the figure boldly drawn on our wooden tree counter in October in Avondale Forest Park when we planted some of the 2,000 native bird cherry trees provided by key partner teams in our climate action, the Tree Council of Ireland and Coillte nurseries. The boy planters of Rathdrum, Co Wicklow, were all smiles for the cameras for the *Irish Times* and *Independent Newspapers* after walking through the crisp autumn leaves from their national school. Everyone loves a good news story right now!

To explain this progress. Well, we are on an accelerator programme all year, you see, as part of our Rethink Ireland Award and have been learning all the new tricks; which I am very pleased to learn are the old-fashioned tricks of good business. Not dissimilar to teaching! Quiz people. Ask them what they would like, then help them out if you can. Finally thank them for their work (Thank you everyone who has helped us in any way, big or small!) and issue a pat-on-the-back or, in these socially distant times, a prize (our favourite being Crann magazines and, of course, chocolate).

My favourite trick of all? Delegation. Though we love nothing better than getting our boots muddy, delegation became a necessity with the 2 km limit and, later, travel bans and advice; we have made a virtue of necessity and have put together a kit of easy guidelines to support our tree planting communities remotely. Our growing team has expanded again to include our dynamic Community Liaison Facilitator, artist, environmentalist and Orchard Project hero Steven Doody. And we are now interviewing for our third Masters in Sustainability TU



**On SPAR National Tree Day at the launch of 'A Guide for Landowners to Managing Roadside Trees' by Minister of State for Land Use and Biodiversity at the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Pippa Hackett (second left) are, from left, Eanna Ni Lamhna, President of the Tree Council of Ireland; Cormac Downey, Vice-President of the Tree Council of Ireland, and Orla Farrell, Founder, Easy Treesie.**

Dublin research intern in a row.

A huge boost to our project was the securing of a Woodland Support Grant by the Department of Agriculture and Forestry in August of this year. A grant under the same scheme was awarded to Crann itself and to the GAA who are rolling out the planting of 45,000 native saplings with our project this season through their new Green Clubs network. Not only do these awards provide

most valuable support to our project, we are also able to harness the considerable power of the Department's expert teams in spreading the good news of our work as we restore the countryside! There has been an unprecedented level of support from a huge variety of sectors, from companies working on the energy transition from fossil fuels such as Irish company Maxol to corporate groups keen to join our merry band through volun-tree days out and individuals such as a grandmother living abroad wishing to sponsor a tree for each of her Irish grandchildren for Christmas.

Which brings us neatly back to SPAR National Tree Day in October as we kick off our new planting season with ceremonies in Counties Wicklow, Dublin and Limerick launching our rolling timetable of mass



**At the planting of an oak tree on their new school campus, to kick off the start of the Colaiste Chiarain biodiversity forest planting project, are Principal Gerard O'Sullivan, John Kelly, Micheal Delohery and the school Green Schools Committee. This project is in collaboration with the Tree Council of Ireland, represented here by CEO Brendan Fitzsimons, and Crann/Easy Treesie's Orla Farrell.**

planting over the winter months carried out with safety, fun and learning in mind!

## And our reason for doing all this?

Easy Treesie is listed on the world trillion tree campaign, a challenge of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021-2030 to bring down temperature by 1 degree; enough to buy civilisation 17 extra years to work on other,

lasting solutions. We're planting 1M trees with Ireland's 1M children and their communities by 2023-4 (equal to 0.5 Phoenix Park's worth). Then we'll go large (1 Billion trees, equal to 500 Phoenix Parks)! As I write we have planted 205,009 saplings so far, partnering with almost 300 Irish communities, on public land as far as we can manage.

## What questions might you have?

**How is it going?** We had a waiting list last year for 30 communities so we'd say pretty good.

**How do we do it?** We get tree-mendous support from myriad sponsors and supporters: Coillte, Trees on the Land and the many Irish nurseries and seed-growers who supply

## I had better explain myself

I'm Orla Farrell, registered primary and second level teacher and climate optimist on this day when the US and China announce a new agreement in Glasgow. I've always loved getting outside the classroom and teaming up with others to do exciting things. After doing a lovely native hedgerow, a stand of native trees and then an orchard tree on our school grounds we ran out of space! We found Plant-for-the-Planet whose motto "~~stop talking start planting~~" sounded exciting in the ex-tree-me. Felix, a 9-year old schoolboy, set a challenge for the children of every country in the world to plant a million trees. When we found out Ireland has a million school children we thought, what a Cinderella story, it's a fit! We planted 300 saplings in the park beside our school in 2017 during Ireland's first Tree Academy, a climate conference for children of a kind now running in 80 countries. Soon every local school surrounding Seagrang Park had joined us, planting a tree for every school in Ireland. We thought: if we could plant another 299 trees for every primary school, that would be the million done! I met with such interest in helping out with this project, started as part of our Green Flag action plan in school that I teamed up with all the experts and tree lovers in Crann –Trees for Ireland and then stepped out of my school to take the challenge on the road.

saplings, fruit trees and even some large specimens for our many special occasions .

**What kind of trees do you plant?** Our motto: the Right Tree in the Right Place. Native and common Irish trees, the odd fancy one for the fun. Subject to availability. Young ones, as they are the easiest.

**When do you plant them?** In the dormant season, winter and spring, it suits them.

**Are they free?** Nothing is free. There are some obvious terms and conditions, e.g. you'll commit to adding the trees to the map and minding them while they establish!

**How many trees can I get?** 100/200 or 300 for suitable projects, around a wheelbarrow-full = (enough to plant 1,000 square metres, tops.)

**How do I get trees?** Contact us and we'll do our best at [orla@easytreesie.com](mailto:orla@easytreesie.com).

**How else can I help?** Easy as 1, 2, TREE.

1. If you can plant trees, please do and add them to the UN map on Tree Mapper (a free





6th year Leaving Cert Applied Horticulture students who have been involved in cherry tree planting at St Finian's Community College, Swords, Co Dublin, marking National Science Week, November 2021, from left: Phelim, Dean, Jakub, Leon and Cillian.

saplings to be put in the ground next spring. The children are excited to see these trees growing and they were delighted to have a day out planting and then having their goodies and drink." *Margaret Haugh, Balrothery Tidy Towns.*

"Our group, Go Greener with Grangecon, were absolutely thrilled with the large donation of trees we received through the Easy Treesie Project. It gave us a chance to bring our community together for a second year in a row in a tree planting project at a time when we couldn't be together in any other way. Ours is a great tree loving (now herbicide-free) community and this project brought such joy to so many. We especially loved seeing children happily getting stuck in with their shovels and watering cans. After all, these trees are for them and their future. *Go Greener with Grangecon.*

"Current Covid-19 restrictions has meant that the Association's planting programme for spring 2021 was somewhat curtailed. Swords Woodland Association was very grateful for the supply of 1,500 trees through the Easy Treesie project. Some of these trees were heeled-in, a means of keeping the young trees in a temporary location. Suitable sites had been identified in collaboration with the council and these trees are now being planted in their permanent homes where they will grow into mature trees and woodlands." *Swords Woodland Association.*

"St Finian's Community College is one of the 12 local schools which has been planting with our organisation and with Easy Treesie for a number of years. The pupils have benefited in terms of wellbeing and the positive feelings gained from doing something for our local environment and its biodiversity." *Ciaran Burke, Agriculture-Horticulture and Science Teacher.*

"I really enjoy doing Horticulture and getting outside to do things like planting trees. We get to learn about trees and nature. I enjoy physical work, it makes a change from learning from books and screens. I find it hard work but when we all work together it's great fun. It has really made me consider a future career in horticulture." *Cillian Harford (17), St Finian's Community College student.*

app for your phone). If you can't plant you can donate them: could you sponsor a community to plant a woodland for €3,000 on easytreesie.com or trilliontreecampaign.org (all paid to charity crann.ie)? Or receive a lovely gift certificate designed by Dublin artist Ruza Leko for a €10 single tree on the project? Or plant trees from 20c abroad on our sister projects.

2. Champion the trees!
3. Connect us to like-minded people!

### Feedback from some community-based Crann/Easy Treesie Projects

"How to hide a forest in a city?" asked Paul Redmond of Mud Island Community Garden (MICG). "Working with the local community MICG have planted 800 native Irish saplings in Dublin's north-east inner city. There have been numerous greening strategies for inner city Dublin over the years which have had little impact. Bringing people together by keeping them apart, the initiative saw 800 saplings planted in gardens and buckets within a radius of 1 km of the garden. A map has been generated documenting where trees have been planted," adds Steven Doody.

"Last year with Tidy Towns, we planted 12,000 saplings around 4 villages. This year will see 700 saplings planted around the GAA club grounds and the grounds being declared herbicide free." *Kilmeade, Co Kildare, Tidy Towns Report.*

"600 saplings planted on the grounds of this social initiative." *Campbell Community Trust, Dunlavin, Co Wicklow.*

"Welcoming 1,000 project saplings on

campus part of our Green Week 2021,"

*Green Campus Report, Maynooth University, Co Kildare.*

"Thanks so much, Easy Treesie! By donating and gifting our village the tree saplings, Easy Treesie has helped us in many ways to:

- Enhance our beautiful green areas, e.g. our front shore promenade. Greenore is looking so much better with the addition of these trees and saplings. They have provided valuable habitats for biodiversity, a subject close to the hearts of our community in Greenore.
- Work towards improving the air quality of our village in an area with industrial dust and air pollution. Planting tree saplings is now part of a GRTT plan in allowing us to address these problems for now and the future.
- Bring community together with a shared goal.
- Share planting of saplings by collaborating with our neighbouring villages of Carlingford, Omeath and Grange.

We felt lucky to be included in such a fantastic project. It was a tremendous boost to the village 'togetherness', uplifting the spirits for our community. The pandemic was a socially isolating experience for many of our neighbours. Receiving the trees gave us the opportunity to work together. Would we recommend participation in this project to a friend? Most definitely." *Greenore Tidy Towns, Co Louth*

"We were delighted to be part of the Easy Treesie campaign. The families in Rosepark planted the mixed native tree saplings on the back perimeter of the large green and then continued to plant on the bank in Glebe Park. The children then planted six pots with

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# Trees in the Burren

George Cunningham's Burren books give details of almost all the sites mentioned in this article. Exceptions: Coole Park and Garryland. Burren Journey East and Burren Journey South never came to fruition...

By GEORGE CUNNINGHAM

*Stony Seaboard far and foreign  
Stony hills poured over space  
Stony landscape of the Burren  
Stones in every fertile place.*

JOHN Betjeman's lines seem to emphasise this treeless north Clare landscape of the Cromwellian Ludlow who talked about not having enough timber there to hang a man. But there is.

This *petra fertilis*, the fertile rock after which the Cistercians named their abbey at Corcomroe, has fascinating pockets and stands of trees, some bonsai-like peeking out of the grykes and some elders like the venerable pollarded ash trees in Ballyvaughan village, recently pruned and ready for yet another year. Every time I pass, I say a silent prayer for their owner who allowed and allows them to live out their old age, unencumbered as they are with the ubiquitous ivy so unbecoming to thousands of ash trees on the Irish landscape. But in the Burren, and particularly in the fertile valleys, our princely ash, loving as it does the limestone nutrients, is able to display all its attributes of foliage, bark and fruit to singular advantage.

Bare, magical Mullaghmore, surely the icon of conservation in Ireland, was denuded of its tree cover by improving humans, albeit over the millennia. Pollen analysis has shown that extensive Burren forests of mixed deciduous, pine and yew woodland covered these uplands between 8,000 and 7,000 BC.

Recent research from archaeological excavations has revealed a Burren hitherto unknown. But it still keeps its secrets. The majestic and world-famous dolmen at Poul nabrone yielded much information when excavated some time ago, not least its use



over the centuries from 3,800 BC to 3,200 BC. However, analysis of samples of its fossil pollen and spores showed these to be mostly devoid of identifiable fossil material. So, we continue to wonder what the landscape was like at that time.

Today, on the north-facing Burren clifflides, holly with its shattered green-polished leaves really stand out. And what a sight they are, especially in winter when berry-laden with their leaves of exceptional beauty, described as the best in Ireland. Wonder at the whitethorns at Templecronan; what a delight in May when the landscape is alight with their lustrous flowers and clinging odour. What a contrast they make to the planted beeches at Gragan's Castle Hotel, snug under Corkscrew Hill.

If you want to get lost, go into the mazes of hazel but mind the stabbing blackthorn. I often wondered if we could harvest the bountiful yield of hazel nuts for widespread human use. Years ago, a trial run in the hazel groves around Aillwee cave proved to be non-commercial.

See if you can glimpse a pinemarten in lovely but lonely Oughtdarra. These valleys



are really magical oases with rich species varieties. And what a thrill it is to walk across the limestone pavements with their clints and grykes, abounding in countless willow and other hybrids. Climb the gentle, stepped hills both for the views and the unexpected discoveries. Like the solitary Irish whitebeam, *Sorbus Hibernica*, that Charles Nelson found growing on Cappanawalla above Newtown Castle and the Burren College of Art and which Wendy Walsh illustrated in the iconic Trees of Ireland.

Walk across to Colman's hermitage under Keelilla. His well and refuge awaits your discovery, hidden in the shrubbery. It could have been here that the monk wrote...

*I have a hut in the wood  
No one knows it but the Lord  
An ash tree this side, a hazel beyond  
A great fern makes the door*

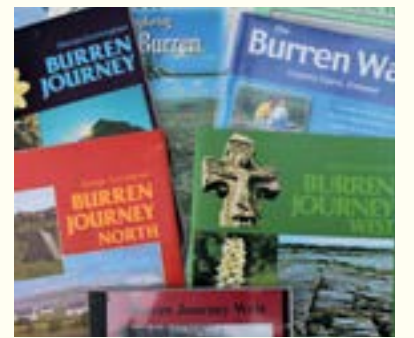
Many lifetimes later, we inherited Coole Park with Lady Gregory's holm oak avenue, her limes with their carpets of garlic in May and the majestic London plane still guarding

## Burren archive

In October of last year, the author of this article, George Cunningham, presented his entire body of research on the Burren to the County Clare Public Library Service. All 16 boxes of material and more than 3,000 slides are now in the archives of the library.

George became interested in the Burren region in the very early 1970s and he is the author of three guides: Burren Journey, Burren Journey West and Burren Journey North. The other proposed guides, Burren Journey South and Burren Journey East never came to fruition, although much research had been done). In 1998, Exploring the Burren was published by Town House.

He researched and wrote many versions of the Burren Way and was co-founder with Michael Greene of the Burren Spring Conferences. He was a pivotal colleague in the founding of the Burren College of Art, and various Burren related activities there.



the long-demolished house, proud home to so many literary endeavours. Her autographed copper beech bears testament to the giants of Ireland's literary revival who 'came like swallows and like swallows went'. Yes, too, Yeats' seven odours, seven murmurs, seven woods' echo and re-echo around this magical place.

And in adjoining Garryland with its yew and prostrate juniper we find some of the best surviving wildwoods in Ireland with purging and alder buckthorn right down to the turloughs, and many times submerged by the rising waters.

We need to guard jealously these wildwood places where one can feel and sense God's Ireland, an Ireland that is diminished every day with yet more concrete and tarmac.

Well did the poet Gerard Manley Hopkins put it:

*What would the world be once bereft of wet  
and wildness  
Wildness and wet; oh let them be left  
Let them be left, wildness and wet  
Long live the weeds and the wildness yet.*



## A Trappist monk finds blessings and beauty among the trees of his monastery grounds

By **Fr Bavo Benedictus Samosir**, OCSO (Order of Cistercians of Strict Observance)

One of the joys of autumn is seeing the bright yellow leaves of the lime trees in the grounds of Mount St Joseph Abbey, Roscrea. Nature looks bright, even though at that particular time black clouds covered the horizon. And when the sun comes to give its rays, nature is brighter because of the yellow glow of the lime tree leaves.

I, who was walking leisurely between two rows of lime trees, was carried away by the cheerful and peaceful atmosphere, enjoying the natural brightness given by the sun and the yellow colour of the lime tree leaves. Nature and trees invite me to join in the joy. "Let the land and all it bears joy, all the trees of the wood shout for joy". (Psalm 95:12)

A light breeze blew, making the yellow leaves seem to dance on every swaying twig. Some leaves fall off the branches and float in the air before landing on the earth to give fertility to the soil. The road between the two rows of lime trees becomes beautiful because it is decorated with the colour of the yellow leaves that spread. The air feels cold on the skin but warm in the heart because of the beauty of the yellow colour of the lime tree leaves.

The Trappist monastery has always been close to nature. Nature with trees keeps silence in the convent surroundings, away from the hustle and bustle of the city. The natural atmosphere will also really help our hearts to praise the greatness of God because nature is like a voice blaring the majesty of its Creator. "Let the earth bless the Lord, give glory and eternal praise to Him. Mountains and hills, bless the Lord, give glory and eternal praise to Him. Everything that grows on the earth, bless

# Yellow leaves of lime trees in autumn



the Lord, give glory and eternal praise to Him" (Daniel 3:74-76).

### Mutually beneficial

The natural atmosphere with trees invites people from different counties to come to Mount St Joseph Abbey. They came not only to pray privately in the church but they also take a walk to enjoy the beauty of nature under the shady leaves of the trees. When we walk among the trees our heart will feel at ease. We breathe fresh and clean air because of the oxygen produced by trees in the process of making their food. And we know that oxygen is needed in metabolic processes in our bodies,

The church of Mount St Joseph Abbey with an autumn foreground of lime trees. Pictures Fr Bavo Samosir

namely the processing of food nutrients that are absorbed by the body to be transformed into energy and the process of forming new molecules to carry out body functions.

On the other hand, trees need carbon dioxide to make their food. Carbon dioxide is a waste gas produced as a result of metabolism in the human body that is released when we exhale. So, actually, trees and humans have a mutually beneficial relationship with each other.

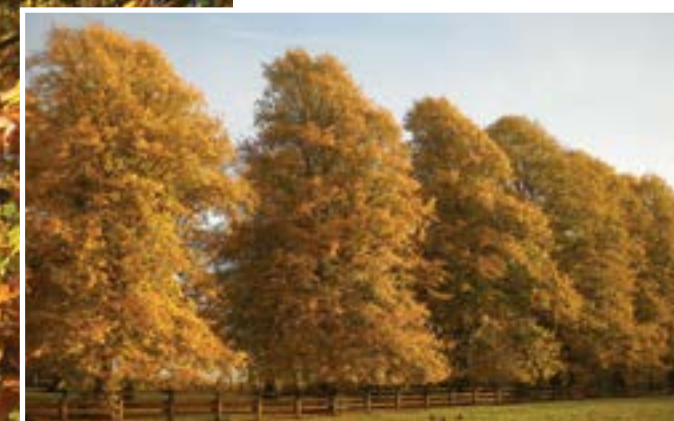
On a large scale, carbon dioxide is a

polluting gas that is mostly produced by industrial activities. And we need to realise that our daily activities can produce carbon dioxide. For example, through the use of electrical energy, activities using vehicles, etc. Pollution from carbon dioxide gas can increase the accumulation of carbon dioxide gas in the atmosphere, which can cause global warming. The earth we live in is suffering greatly from global warming. In this case, trees have a very important role to reduce global warming because trees absorb carbon dioxide.

So, we need to plant trees in our environment. A shady environment and lots of trees will make our lives cooler and

more comfortable. We have a responsibility to protect nature, especially the natural environment in Ireland. So, let's participate in protecting and caring for this earth. One way that we can do this is by planting trees. Mount St Joseph Abbey Community has planted and maintained trees in the monastery grounds. The existence of trees is useful for reducing global warming and air pollution and, of course, we can enjoy the beauty of the colourful leaves in autumn.

When enjoying the beauty of the yellow leaves of the lime tree, dancing because of the wind and the leaves falling one by one, I wrote about that beauty in a short poem.



A line of lime tree beauty



The monastery in a sylvan setting of lime trees

### Releasing Beauty The trees dance to the rhythm of the wind.

Release the beauty in the colour of the foliage.

Strand by strand leaving branches

The wind welcomed them in rhythm

And the colours of the beautiful foliage float in the dance in the air

Dancing in beautiful harmony

But sometimes the foliage danced without harmony in the roar.

Following the rhythm of the blowing wind

Earth doesn't want beautiful foliage to dance too long in the rhythm of the wind

It pulled the foliage and the dance of leaf colours had to stop.

The foliage can't resist the attraction of the earth

They fell into the arms of the earth.

Have to release the dance, releasing the beautiful colours

To merge with the earth and be silent forever.

The author of this article is a monk and priest at Mount St Joseph Abbey, Roscrea, Co Tipperary





Some of the participants line out for a correctly distanced photo with Declan and Yvonne Foley. Second from left is Crann Board member Diarmuid McAree, who led them on a guided forest ecology walk.

# WORKSHOP AND WALK AT LONGFORD DEMESNE WOOD, BELTRA, CO SLIGO

**C**ONGRATULATIONS to Crann –Trees for Ireland members Declan and Yvonne Foley of Longford Demesne Woodland, Beltra, Co Sligo. On 11 August they organised a highly successful launch of their woodland's forest ecology, biodiversity and wellbeing activities.

The day's workshop also included a presentation and discussion on the new EU Green Deal relating to forestry and the EU forest and biodiversity strategies.

This was followed by a guided forest ecology walk through the Foleys' RDS award-winning and wonderfully biodiverse woodland. Leading the walk, Crann Director Diarmuid McAree emphasised the importance of the forestry aspects of the new EU Green Deal, the objectives of which are to improve the quality and quantity of EU forests and to strengthen their protection, restoration and resilience. Its aim, he said, was to adapt Europe's forests to the new conditions, weather extremes and the high uncertainty being brought about by climate change.

This, he emphasised, is a necessary precondition if forests are to continue to deliver their many socio-economic and environmental functions and to underpin a vibrant rural forestry infrastructure.

The main forestry actions envisaged in the EU Green Deal were discussed and are summarised in the separate panel.

## EU Green Deal: Forestry Actions

- Promoting the sustainable forest bioeconomy for long-lived wood products.
- Ensuring sustainable use of wood-based resources for bioenergy.
- Promoting the non-wood forest-based bioeconomy, including ecotourism and ecotherapy.
- Developing skills and empowering people for the sustainable forest-based bioeconomy.
- Protecting the EU's last remaining primary and old-growth forests.
- Ensuring forest restoration and reinforced sustainable forest management for climate adaptation and forest resilience.
- Re- and afforestation of biodiverse forests, including the planting of 3 billion additional trees by 2030.
- Providing financial incentives for forest owners and managers for improving the quantity and quality of EU forests.

It was agreed by all the participants at the gathering that the Longford Demesne Woodland Centre, expertly run by Declan and Yvonne, was an ideal location to promote, practice and study these new EU forest strategy objectives.

Historically, this area was in the demesne land of Longford House, owned by the Crofton family from about 1580 to when purchased by the Foleys in the 1970s. The estate has been well documented, most

famously by Lady Morgan's writings in the 1800s.

This 9.5 ha private woodland comprises 6 ha of old wood, improved in species composition under the Native Woodland Conservation Scheme and the installation of a new plantation under the Native Woodland Establishment Scheme on 3.5 ha. The old estate walls accommodate nests. Bat roosts, badger setts and undergrowth provide shelter for a variety of wildlife.

The mixed species of trees, of mixed ages, has produced an abundance of deadwood and hollow standing trunks, together with large undisturbed litter and soil layers, which host a wide variety of fungi.

Longford Demesne rests beneath the shelter of Knockacree, enjoying the fresh water flow from the mountain streams, combining with natural springs through the forest, continuing on to the Atlantic Ocean.

This area tells the story of generations of farming communities, covering millennia, who depended on this land. It has a rich heritage including a ring fort and fulacht fia, protected within the woodland.

This special place combines the provocative forms of earth, water and stone, to embody momentum and forces of nature in this ancient sacred space.

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## HAZEL

by Geraldine Mills

All my life I've been drawn to the sanctuary of trees, the hazel being the closest to my heart. The house of my childhood was called Hazel Grove, the grove being a small wildness of hazel bushes around it. It was there that my siblings and I spent our days, for that small copse reared us. We scavenged briars and branches throughout the growing season, threaded wild strawberries onto long filaments of grass; purple stained our mouths with blackberries, gnawed the flesh off ripe haws as if they were miniature apples, only ever returning home when hunger or darkness drove us. But the hazel nut was our prize, and this poem tries to capture the magic of those days.

## HAZEL

*Drawn to the wildness  
beyond our back garden,  
we scaled the stone wall of the everyday  
into the forbidden world of the other,  
scenting on the wind that hazel shells  
had already ripened, turned nut-brown.*

*We lived between ground and air,  
feral, hunter-gatherers, knowing nothing  
of the tree's lore:  
how God-messenger, Hermes, carried its  
sacred wand,  
made Fionn Mac Cumhaill the clever  
clogs he was  
or poor demented Aengus was off  
wandering  
in the grove where we were bewitched.*

*The diviner's rod within us doused  
the magic of their abundance when  
the cobs unveiled themselves  
from the covert of saw-toothed leaves.  
The way a flick of the thumb against the  
bract  
surrendered a perfect mahogany from its  
sheath.*

*When we had foraged all that we could,  
we settled – like small wood animals –  
on the cushions of moss  
beneath the underwing of tree,  
our chosen stone nestled  
in the crucible of our palms.*

*The sound of shells cracking  
drove the collared dove from its perch  
as we eased out each perfect kernel.  
And, oh, the taste,  
the bread of angels,  
a midden of hazel husks gathered at our  
feet.*

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## A TREE

*A tree reveals itself to me  
a single feature at a time  
a canopy to shade the sun  
a place out of the driving rain  
a root that draws life from the soil  
a sap whose slow rise is its source  
a bark that stands up to great force  
a branch that hosts the wild bird's song.*

*A tree reveals itself to me  
a single value at a time  
a timberland that offers wood  
and gives jobs to a neighbourhood  
a barrier that breaks the wind  
a hedge that looks well neatly trimmed  
a plant that grips soil to the ground  
and guards the earth with all its might.*

*A tree reveals itself to me  
a single instinct at a time  
a rustle that I barely hear  
a quiet feeling when I'm near  
a gentle presence on the path  
a marker in an unknown land  
a depth and height of buoyant leaves  
that break and bounce within the breeze.*

*A tree reveals itself to me  
a single blessing at a time  
a picnic place to entertain  
a refuge when I'm under strain  
a force that grounds and lets me feel  
a calming source that helps me heal.  
A tree brings grandeur to the air  
and everywhere I go it's there.*

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## HOLLY PICKING

*Come friend, let us go and  
have a holly picking change from  
bars and streets and office walls that  
grind and eat the image making mind.*

*Come break the mould and pick the holly  
not in parcelled shops but on December fields  
with freshly running wind.*

*Come see the river bound the bare beech trees  
which touch the sky that threatens rain and  
feel the winter bare take breath from heated air.*

*Come leave the car upon the pebbled verge to  
climb the ivy wall and walk through heavy grass  
that soon will feed a healthy cattle stock.*

*The bright is going off  
as berries red and hard to see  
are sought along the bank until  
a fertile tree of prickly green is found.*

*Along the distant line the winter sun is dim  
and weakly fills the solstice scene with  
golden light while holly rises up  
against the wall of evening sky.*

*Darkness falls, while all around the holly  
weaves and breathes against the sudden gust.  
The precious branch is carried high as single  
birdsong softly thrills the echoed air.*

*This holly gift is good and little bits  
will jolly empty walls.*

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# An caidreamh siombóiseach idir crainn agus daoine

Séamus Kavanagh

**L**e bliain anuas bhí an saol mór is a bhean amuigh faoin aer ag baint taitnimh agus tairbhe as a bheith ag siúl sna páirceanna, sna coillte agus cois aibhneacha i gcaitheamh na paindéime. Seans nár fhéach an chuid is mó de na coisithe sin an dara huair ar iontaisí an dúlra riamh roimhe sin! Go deimhin le cois phléisiúr Dé a bhí le fáil sa dúlra, rinne na siúlóidí amuigh faoin aer an-mhaitheas do mheabhairshláinte na gcoisithe chomh maith.

Tá planda tábhachtach amháin, áfach, gur deacair do na coisithe gan é a thabhairt faoi deara le linn a gcuid siúlóidí. Is é sin an crann - rí na bplandaí agus an planda is mó ar domhan. Is gné fhiór álainn dár dtimpeallacht nádúrtha na crainn atá ar gach taobh dinn. Bíonn áilleacht, mistéir agus maorgacht ag baint leo ó cheann ceann na bliana - na chéad bhachlógas glasa san earrach; an duilliúr taibhseach sa samhradh; na duilleoga ildaithe dochreidte san fhómhar agus na géaga loma dramatúla amháin x-ghathú artairí broinceacha an duine in aghaidh spéir an gheimhridh. Tarraingíonn siad ár n-áird chucu nuair a bhímid lasmuigh agus is sainchomharthaí so-aitheanta iad a chuidíonn linn ár mbealach a dhéanamh.

Ar feadh an chéad nócha faoin gcéad de stair na cruinne ní raibh crann ar bith ann. Tá an domhan 4.5 billiún bliain d'aois agus thart ar 300 milliún bliain ó shin tháinig crainn ar an bhfód den chéad uair agus ba chor cinniúnach é sin i saol an chine dhaonna mar chruthaigh siad timpeallacht bhríomhar d'ainmhithe talún. Chothaigh agus bheathaigh siad na hainmhithe allta gan áireamh lena n-áirítear ár nsir chrannacha - na simpeansaithe - agus cuireadh áit chónaithe ar fáil dóibh uile.

Tá caidreamh siombóiseach idir crainn agus daoine mar gineann daoine an dé-osaí

charbóin a análaíonn crainn agus gineann na crainn ocsaigin a bhíonn de dhíth ar dhaoine. Tá an-dealramh ag crainn linne maidir le gnéithe fisiciúla freisin. Déanta d'uisce, cuid mhór, atáimid araon. Seasaimid araon díreach agus eascraíonn géaga ó chabhail lárnach uainn. Díreach cosúil linn féin is crann ar leith é gach crann. Cuirimid araon fréamhacha doimhne láidre síos a mhaireann na céadta nó na mílte bliain. Nascann crainn sinn len ár n-áiteanna dúchais. Agus mar an gcéanna linne, de réir saineolaithe labhraíonn crainn lena chéile trí naisc ghréasáin d'fhungais a fhasann timpeall ar na fréamhacha. Arbh é seo an chéad ghréasán cumarsáide - an 'wood wide web' - a bhí ann leis na cianta cairbreacha.

Bhí crainn inár gclós súgartha agus sinn ag fás aníos. D'fhoghlaimíomar conas dreapadh agus luascadh ó chraobh go craobh orthu le linn ár n-óige; rinneamar folach bíog ar a chéile i measc na gcrann. Ní dhéanfaínn dearmad ar an oíche a thit mé de chrann anuas ar chlaibín oscailte canna a ghoin mo ghlúin. Tá a lorg ann fós mar níor chuireadh greim ar bith ann ag an am.

Tá an t-ádh dearg orm mar is féidir liom siúl trí choill, cois abhann agus thar pháirceanna fairsinge sa tsíúlóid chéanna i bhfad ar shiúl ó ghlór thrácht na mbóithre.



Mar bharr maise ar an scéal tá cora trasna na habhann ar an mbealach agus is ann a stopaim ar feadh tamaill bhig faoi scáth na gcrann, mé ag breathnú ar an radharc draíochtúil agus ag éisteacht le glór suaimehneasach an uisce ag titim le fána. Bíom ar strae i mo chuid brionglóidí ann agus samhlaim mé féin i mo luí lomnocht in aghaidh na cora agus an t-uisce ag teacht ina gcaisí anuas orm ag glanadh mo bhaill bheatha ó bhaithis go bonn. Déanann an t-uisce síochta spior spear de mo bhuairt agus glantar ar siúl i sa sruthán mear. Mothaím in

amanna go bhfuil mé gafa sa chlapsholas idir saol na Páigantachta agus saol na Críostaíochta.

D'éirigh mé an-cheannúil go deo ar na crainn uile a bhíonn timpeall orm ar an mbealach. Ach is é mo rogha ceann ná crann darach. Ní chliseann orm beannú do mo 'chol ceathair' i nádúr gach lá. Agus cogar: Labhraím leis! Sea, ní thógfaínn oraibh é dá gceapadh sibh go raibh mé le craobhacha. Bíonn faitíos orm go mbeadh siúlóir eile ag cúléisteacht le mo chomhrá agus go sceithfeadh sé orm leis na húdaráis agus go dtiocfadh lucht na gcótaí bána chun mé a thionlacan chuig aonad daingean éigin. Ach is cuma liom sa sioc mar

go gcuireann mo chomhrá aontaobhach ar mo shuaimehneas mé.

Ní mise an t-aon duine amháin a bhraitheann an mhaitheas nádúrtha seo mar de réir taighde déanann crainn leas don tsláinte. Laistigh de chúpla nóiméad don duine a bheith timpeallaithe ag crainn agus spás glas titeann a bhrú fola, moillíonn ráta a chroí agus íslíonn leibhéal a struis. In Éirinn fadó, ar na saolta págánacha bhí crainn fiorthábhachtach ar chúiseanna spioradálta chomh maith. I go leor reiligiún chreidte go traidisiúnta go raibh spioraid na sinsear ina gcónaí sna crainn. Sa tSeapáin, cleachtann daoine gníomhaíocht ar a dtugtar 'shinrin-yoku' a chiallaíonn 'folcadh san fhoraois'. Caitheann siad tréimhsí ama amuigh faoi cheannbhrat na gcrann ag sú isteach an atmaisféir trí na céadfaí.

Sa lá atá inniu ann is féidir luaithreach duine a chur i bhfaighneog chrainn in Éirinn. Soláthraíonn luaithreach an duine na cothaitheigh riachtanacha atá de dhíth ar chrann óg a chuirtear os a chionn. Tá adhlacadh den chineál seo níos saoire agus níos neamhdhíobhálaí don timpeallacht ná an t-adhlacadh traidisiúnta. Nár dheas an smaoineamh é, fiú más aisteach agus beagáinín scanrúil é, dá bhfásfadh crann darach san áit inar cuireadh mo luaithreach i bhfaighneog.

D'fhéadfadh mo pháistí, mo gharpháistí agus na glúnta a thiocfadh ina ndiaidh a scíth a ligean, leabhar a léamh nó picnic a ithe faoi scáth an chrainn s'agamsa. Nach ar scáth a chéile a mhaireann na daoine - tar éis an tsaol.

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**Foclóir:**  
**Siombóiseach** symbiotic  
**artairí broinceacha** bronchial arteries  
**insir crannacha** arboreal ancestors  
**ina gcaise** gushing  
**spior spear a dhéanamh** dispel  
**faighneog** pod  
**folach bíog** hide and seek  
**faighneog** a pod  
**cothaitheigh** nutrients

## GET YOURSELF A FREE MUSIC CD FROM CRANN MAN LIAM

**L**ONGTIME LIFE member of Crann, Liam Kenneally of Ballydehob, West Cork, has produced a new CD of ten original songs which he has dedicated to Crann and is distributing free of charge. Recipients are invited to make a voluntary contribution to Crann - Trees for Ireland.

Liam is a West Cork-based music teacher and gigging musician. He and his wife Ger manage a sustainable small holding on which they foster a wide variety of native Irish trees and shrubs. They garden organically and harvest their own winter fuel for their wood-burning stove. The songs are informed



by themes including love of landscape, environmental protection, reverence for nature, community and anti-militarism. The albums' style, while heavily influenced by reggae and dub, has an overall rock feel. It is infused with vocal harmonies and original synth voices, self programmed. Liam also plays acoustic and

electric violins throughout. The CD was recorded, mixed and mastered by him at his own studio, Pipistrelle. The disc is framed by some gorgeous photos by local photographic artist Vincent Bourke, a man similarly inspired by the natural world. Vinnie also assisted in the album's artwork design. (See his photographs at

Vincent Bourke Photography). Liam's lifelong friend and wildlife enthusiast, Brian White from Clonkilly, lent his vastly informed musical ears to the production. To receive a free copy of the CD, drop a line to Liam Kenneally, Pipistrelle, Rathravane, Ballydehob, Co Cork, enclosing a €2 stamp.



### TIDY TOWNS AND LOCAL COMMUNITY GROUPS

**A**T THE CRANN - Trees for Ireland AGM (see Pgs 3, 4) the Secretary's report noted that Tidy Towns groups were hit hard with volunteers of a certain age being confined to barracks. However, every county in Ireland took up the task of improving their local environment and raising awareness of the positive aspects of being outdoors and enjoying the natural heritage on their doorsteps e.g. Shankill Tidy Towns planted 11,600.

Crann - Trees for Ireland continues to promote the nationwide campaign, Public Participation Networks via our membership and Crann magazine. The PPN initiative enhances the Tidy Towns work which is the backbone of local community participation. We would encourage Crann Members to consider getting involved in their local PPN.

● Our congratulations to Ennis, Co Clare, on winning this year's competition and to Athboy, Co Meath, on winning the Tree Project Award, sponsored by the Tree Council of Ireland.

### CRANN'S ASSIST PROGRAMME

Crann - Trees for Ireland has a Tidy Towns Assist Programme which consists of a visit from one of our tree experts - who will meet committee members, do a site visit along with an advice clinic and make suggestions on various issues of interest to the Tidy Towns initiative.

This programme assists groups with planting schemes, improving knowledge, raising awareness and achieving valuable extra points for their community efforts.

If interested, we ask that your Tidy Towns Committee become a 'Group Member' of Crann at a special rate of €45 p.a. The Advice Clinic costs €150 plus travelling expenses of 50c per mile (agreed prior to visit), invoice supplied.

Contact us via info@crann.ie or PO Box 860, Celbridge, Co Kildare, with your details.



# HELP! Ivy has taken over my ash plantation!

**M**Y ASH plantation has, like many others around the country, become a sad-looking sight. 2021 marked a noticeable deterioration in the appearance of the trees that were planted in 1995 and had shown great promise up until about five years ago.

There was a time when the ash was almost the last to shed its leaves in autumn but this year they were the first to go and I wonder with some trepidation what they will look like next year. However, something else has started to replace the natural foliage of these ash trees: ivy. It has been creeping steadily through the plantation to the extent that most of the trees are covered with a mat of rich, glossy ivy. There is no doubt that it is thriving and completely in its element. In 1996, the year after I established my plantation, Dr Ristead Mulcahy published a little book 'For Love Of Trees', subtitled 'Trees, Hedgerows, Ivy and The Environment.' Its principal aim was to draw attention to the widespread and, in Dr Mulcahy's own view, the alarming spread of ivy on our trees and hedgerows. Have we not all noticed the advance of ivy in all parts of the country, rural and urban, especially in the last ten years? It seems that every upright structure is now at risk of encroachment by the ivy plant. I even noticed it making inroads on the stone walls of Inisheer whilst on a visit there a few years ago. Ristead Mulcahy's views on the deleterious effects of ivy on trees were something that I would have concurred with, although as he himself pointed out there was no scientific basis to back up such opinions. Nevertheless, where possible I have made efforts to help control the spread of the plant.

But back to my poor ash plantation. Decision time is looming as to its fate. Last winter's resolution to tackle the ivy infestation head-on never actually came to pass and most of the stems now sport a very healthy growth of ivy right up to the crown. Any hopes of achieving timber of any quality are long gone and, at best, something of a salvage operation is the only realistic outcome and to begin all over again with another crop. However, not once in Ristead Mulcahy's book did the



word carbon appear and I am wondering if I might just have the wonder plant of carbon sequestration growing on the stricken ash trees. Has any research ever been carried out on the amount of carbon that might be captured by an ash tree completely covered in ivy compared to what the normal ash foliage of that same tree would achieve? Leaving aside any personal views about the aesthetics or what I might have hoped for with my ash plantation, maybe the pragmatic approach might be to view this as an opportunity provided by nature with potentially massive long-term effects for reducing carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere. What if the silver lining to this particular cloud was the emergence of a super-efficient carbon filtration ecosystem!

Yours,

*Pierse McCan, Ballyowen, Cashel, Co Tipperary*

## THE SPEAKING TREE

The concept of The Speaking Tree dates back to the 5th century BC in India when the founder of Buddhism meditated for 49 days under a Pipal tree, or *Ficus religiosa*, and became enlightened. This column in Crann is a platform for thoughtful comment that may stimulate debate or just reflect on the way of the world.

## JOE BARRY REPLIES

**W**HAT an interesting letter. My own strongly-held personal view which is shared by most people with an interest in and knowledge of wildlife and the environment (except Dr Mulcahy!) is that ivy is good in all sorts of ways, not least its possible potential for carbon sequestration. Contrary to Dr Mulcahy's views, ivy does NOT harm trees but lives in a perfect symbiotic relationship with them, providing at the same time a vital source of food for birds in winter, shelter and food for bats and insects and is the last source of nectar for our wild bees in late autumn. Without it, our native wild bees would not survive. It is great stuff and beneficial in all sorts of ways. I am sure Mr McCan is aware of the scheme now available to remove dying ash (I have 40 acres of it) and replant with other species. I am applying for this but, due to the appalling hold-ups in the Forest Service machinery and delays in processing applications, I expect to wait at least a further year before I will get approval. But better late than never.



## Teagasc Forestry Services



### Research

Our research covers many aspects of the life cycle of a forest from seedling to sawdust. Research is carried out in Teagasc research centres in state-of-the-art laboratories and growing facilities and on privately owned farm forests throughout Ireland.



### Advice

Teagasc provides objective and independent advisory services to all private landowners on forestry related matters. Teagasc forestry advisors provide free, independent and objective advice on any technical or financial aspect regarding forestry.



### Training

Teagasc offers a wide range of QQI certified practical courses. Topics can include formative shaping of broadleaves and timber measurement. A forestry qualification from Teagasc enables students to develop wide ranging and interesting careers.





# Forestry

is an excellent source of income for farmers and a sound investment for all land owners with:

- 100% planting grants available,
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- income from thinning and clearfell,

and is a valuable national asset, as:

- an important national resource,
- a raw material for industry,
- a wild life habitat,
- a positive environmental factor (water & climate change),
- a renewable energy source,
- an important recreational resource.

**For information, contact:**

**The Forest Service,  
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine  
Johnstown Castle Estate,  
Co. Wexford**

**or see:**

**[www.agriculture.gov.ie/forestry](http://www.agriculture.gov.ie/forestry)**