



CRANN

SPRING/SUMMER
ISSUE 2019 | NO:109

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COVER

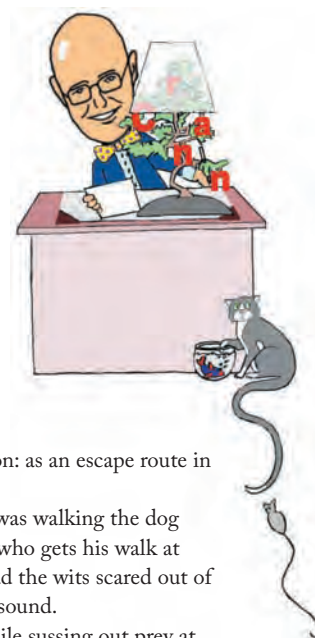
Autumnal Forest was an entry from Robbie O'Leary, Dundrum, Dublin 16, in the 2018 Crann/Coilte Photographic Competition. The picture was taken in Manor Kilbride, Co Wicklow. It serves as a reminder that entries for this year's competition, also sponsored by Coillte, are now open. Details are on Pg 17.

PICTURE CREDITS

Siobhan McNamara, Diarmuid Healy, A Kilcullen Diary, Orla Farrell, IEN, Michael Yallop, RDS, George Cunningham, Peter Cavanagh, Patrick Moran, Lars Verket.

FIRST WORD

It's not as if I've discovered an entirely new use for trees



But I have never before thought of trees in this fashion: as an escape route in an emergency.

Like all the best discoveries, it's part of a story. I was walking the dog after dark (we do this to avoid the Big Scary Brute who gets his walk at unpredictable times during daylight hours) and I had the wits scared out of me by a sudden scuffle and rush and much spitting sound.

The neighbourhood black cat has a habit of hiding under cars while sussing out prey at night. Rocco absolutely hates cats. Put those two facts together and you get an explosion. And where does a cat go in these circumstances? Up a tree, is where.

I don't know the cat's name but in my mind I call him Bertie because of the association with a certain other Bertie and the phrase "up every tree in north Dublin".

Unlike that Bertie, I haven't looked up every tree in north Dublin, partly because I'm nowhere near north Dublin but also because I don't look 'up' a tree. I look 'at' it. Maybe I'll change my habits now after this experience and the realisation that you don't have to be in the Serengeti to see animals in the wild up a tree.

While you might find a domestic cat up a tree these days, one creature you are less likely to find there is a child, simply because children don't climb trees as much nowadays. As Éanna Ní Lamhna pointed out recently, they're too mollycoddled (see Pg 4).

My own attitude to climbing trees is somewhat coloured by the fact that as a teenager I was in the vicinity when a young man of my acquaintance fell out of a tall tree and died. He had climbed very high up to rescue a model airplane that was entangled in the branches. That was 60 years ago and I have often thought of Michael Savage since.

The research quoted by Éanna was carried out for the Heritage Council and it showed that, while there is still a strong connection with nature, the context of that connection is changing from free, wild areas to gardens and play spaces. Presumably because they are safer as they are under supervision.

Which is no consolation for my grandson, Patrick, who broke a bone in his arm this spring when he fell off a (supervised) climbing frame. He's fine, recovering very well with a multi-coloured plaster cast on the arm. At least it wasn't a tree!

Meanwhile, could I suggest that we consider changing our way of measuring trees, from dbh to dch, the diameter at the point where the cat clings just out of reach of an average dog like Rocco.

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.



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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/OAPs	€25
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	Family	€45
	Life	€700
	Corporate	€100

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Payment option: via PayPal www.crann.ie

CRANN is an Irish non-profit organisation promoting and planting broadleaf trees.



By PADDY SMITH

Crann – Trees for Ireland is one of a small number of organisations selected to receive public funding to promote the planting of more trees and encourage sustainable forest management this year and next year.

Our success was announced by Minister of State at the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Andrew Doyle, when he issued the results of a public call by his Department for proposals for tree/forestry promotion. “The call was aimed at encouraging initiatives which will highlight the multifunctional benefits of forestry, promote planting of more trees and encourage sustainable forest management,” he said.

A total of 40 proposals were received, of which 15 were approved. These approvals will now be implemented with almost €830,000 in funding in 2019 and 2020.

At the first meeting, in Dublin, of the education-based projects, Crann – Trees for Ireland was represented by Crann board member Diarmuid McAree and Crann Administrator Marguerite Arbuthnot-O’Brien. Afterwards, Crann chairman Mark Wilkinson said Crann was very pleased to be among the 15 organisations singled out for selection. “It’s a real recognition of the very fine work that Crann is doing at present,” he said, “and in an era when funding is so difficult to come by, this will allow us to continue with this work.”

Minister Doyle said the announcement, in early April, was timely as we celebrated the end of a brilliant National Tree Week. “The response to this call has been hugely encouraging with a wide range of really innovative proposals submitted right across the country,” he said.

The successful projects range from those with a local focus to others which will have a

nationwide and international reach. “I am particularly delighted to see a number of successful projects which will promote the planting of broadleaf trees,” he said. “This will build upon our continuing success in increasing the percentage of broadleaves planted, with well over 500,000 broadleaves planted so far in 2019.”

The Minister said the scope and reach of the projects being funded was impressive, and included a woodland festival, open days for native woodland establishment, promotion of hardwood in the bioeconomy and numerous school-based initiatives that take school children out of the classroom and into local forests to learn about nature and trees. Funding had also been approved for supporting the creation of new Native Woodlands, an international conference on green jobs in the forestry sector and for forest management initiatives for existing owners.

“The recent Oireachtas Committee’s report on Climate Change has clearly identified the essential role which forestry can play in tackling this issue,” the Minister said. “It has set a challenge for us all to which we

must respond. The benefits of forestry range from environmental to economic and recreational and I look forward to the roll-out of these projects in raising awareness of these right across Ireland.”

The full list of successful applicants can be accessed on the Department of Agriculture’s website, press release number 125878. In the meantime, here is a summary of each organisation’s proposal and the location where it will be implemented.

Western Forestry Co-Op: Holding a native woodland open day. Co Galway.

CRANN – Trees for Ireland: Promoting the multifunctional benefits of forestry, including hosting a UN International Conference on Green Jobs in the Forest Sector. National.

Irish Timber Growers Association (ITGA) and Irish Forest Unit Trust (IForUT): Establishment of Demonstration/Exhibition Woodland in Clonad forest. Co Offaly.

Irish Farmers Association (IFA): To increase the level of forestry information available to farmers. National.

Limerick/Tipp Woodland Owners (LTWO): Transfer of information to broadleaves owners. Limerick and Tipperary.

Woodlands of Ireland:

Promoting the native woodland establishment and conservation schemes. National.

Society of Irish Foresters:

Promotion of the multifunctional benefits of Forestry in secondary schools. National

Western Forestry Co-Op:

A woodland festival will be organised. Co Leitrim.

Irish Wood Producers:

A suite of forest-based activities will be developed. Wexford, Kilkenny, Waterford.

Kerry Earth Education Project:

Aims to get people of all ages out into the forests. Co Kerry.

Irish Timber Growers

Association (ITGA): Promotion of sustainable forest management practices. National.

An Taisce (Environmental Education Unit):

Promotion of the multifunctional benefits of forestry to primary and secondary schools. National.

IFA & Western Forestry Co-

Operative: Promotion of good forest management practices. National.

Irish Wood Producers (IWP):

Production of a series of factsheets and videos. National.

Agri Aware: A primary level educational initiative. Limerick, Tipperary, Cork, Kerry, Wicklow.

Crann among select 15 to receive public funding



Misty Morning, the winning picture from the Crann/Coillte photographic competition of 2009. The scene is at Lough Eske, Donegal Town, and it was taken by Siobhan McNamara, Drumnacarry, Lough Eske. This year’s competition rules are on Page 17.



Are we about to see the return of the graceful elm?

By MARK WILKINSON

Half a century ago we lost our wonderful elm trees due to Dutch Elm Disease *Ophiostroma novo-ulmi* which was carried by dark beetles that tended to attack mature trees.

In Britain, Dutch Elm Disease killed 30 million trees. I'm not sure how many we lost, but you could say that we lost the lot.

Since the 1950s, scientists have been trying to develop a resistant variety of elm of so-called Resista-elms. An initiative to plant this new resistant variety was launched by Dame Judi Dench at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show in May.

As the exclusive partner in the UK and Ireland, Hillier Nurseries stocks *Ulmus* New Horizon which has proven to be completely resistant to Dutch Elm Disease and shares the same phenology as the native elm.

It would be wonderful to see the graceful elm on our verdant Irish landscape again. I can only hope that scientists are, or will soon be, making the same effort with our native ash.



An *Ulmus* New Horizon elm growing in Groningen, a city in the Netherlands (Picture: Ronnie Nijboer)

Crann – ‘Trees for Ireland’ AGM

The 2019 Crann Annual General Meeting will be held at Belvedere House, Gardens & Park, Mullingar, Co Westmeath, at 1pm on Saturday 21 September 2019. Directions: www.belvedere-house.ie/Visitor-Info/

All Members of Crann are very welcome to attend the AGM. We would encourage members to consider getting involved in local projects and/or volunteering for Crann events.

We welcome the opportunity to meet with you on the day and to share ideas and suggestions.

If you are unable to attend the AGM you could still participate by way of using your Proxy Vote. Forms are available on request, to be received by Crann – Trees for Ireland, PO Box 860, Celbridge, Co Kildare, no later than 5pm Monday 16 September, 2019. Request a nomination or proxy form: info@crann.ie or Tel 01 6275075

Éanna decries lack of social climbing

By PADDY SMITH

A sad state of affairs has been highlighted by environmentalist Éanna Ní Lamhna. Speaking in Tullyallen, Co Louth, where she opened a new woodland walkway, she gave out about the modern trend of mollycoddling children and pointed out that 40pc of children have never climbed a tree.

This startling fact was revealed in a survey, *Children and the Outdoors*, carried out for the Heritage Council and published in 2016. It was conducted by a team led by Professor Ursula Kilkelly of the School of Law, UCC.

At the opening of the walkway through



Less than half of modern children climb trees (Picture: Wikimedia Ejvanbelle)

King William's Glen, part of the site of the 1690 Battle of the Boyne, Ms Ní Lamhna, vice president of the Tree Council of Ireland, said children should be encouraged to get out into the woods and forests of Ireland. She was very critical of the attitude that led to children being mollycoddled.

She also spoke about the vital contribution of trees to the reduction of carbon emissions. "Our climate is changing because we are putting so much carbon dioxide into the air and that is not a good thing," she said.

The new woodland is an initiative of Tullyallen Access the Glen Committee with about 60pc of the total €82,000 funding

coming from the Town & Village Urban Renewal Scheme.

Support was also received from Louth County Council, Coillte and from local businesses and the community.

The survey showed that 50pc of parents polled had never swum in a lake or river with their children, 40pc had not climbed trees and one in three had never made daisy chains as a family. "What this poll identified was that while there is still a strong connection with nature in Ireland, compared to the UK for example, the context of that connection is changing from free, wild areas to outdoor gardens and play spaces," it said.

GIANTS GROVE:

helping these majestic trees to realise their full potential

By SEAN MCGINNIS

Over 500 years ago, Chaucer wrote that 'an ook cometh of a litel spyr' and, although the language has changed, it is still true that tall oaks from little acorns grow. Of course not only oaks but all the majestic trees we see today had humble beginnings, and it will be true for the Redwoods in Giants Grove too.

What few of us realise, though, are the odds that every impressive tree we see have overcome to realise their full potential. Young trees are weak and vulnerable, so constant supervision and good forest maintenance is essential to ensure saplings survive to become Giants.

Vegetation Control: This is required to protect a specimen from competing vegetation. Competition for light, water and nutrients can significantly impact growth, and may often result in death. Chemical control may be used for particularly aggressive weeds but it is non-selective and can damage beneficial flora, or improper application could even kill the tree being protected. Also, many chemicals are harmful to the environment, so we do not use chemicals in Giants Grove. We use manual grass cleaning. This is where we cut or trample competing vegetation as required once or twice a year. The results are short-term but do no harm to the environment, and this will only be required during the early establishment phase.

Formative Shaping/Pruning: This is the selective removal of forks, large competing side branches, or dead/damaged branches. It concentrates the trees' growth into a single straight stem allowing them to escape competition sooner, and it keeps the tree healthy. It is important not to remove any more than is absolutely necessary, though, or growth will be slowed considerably.



Nutrition/Fertiliser: Although the soil in Giants Grove was tested prior to planting, it is important to keep a close eye on nutritional requirements throughout the site. Nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium are the most important nutrients for trees, but micronutrients such as iron, zinc, copper, etc are also essential. Any specific deficiencies the trees may have are expressed in specific ways – dull foliage, yellowing, leaf sizes, etc, so a fertiliser application can remedy any problems quickly, once discovered.

Pests: Although *Sequoia* and *Sequoiadendron*

rarely suffer from pests, they remain susceptible to scale insect infestations, and the diverse nurse species in Giants Grove could be hit by a range of other insects or diseases. We don't expect any infestations in the Grove, but we keep a close eye out for them anyway because early detection is essential. Deer may also be a pest in young forests and, although we welcome them, we have to work hard to prevent any damage from browsing, fraying or bark stripping.

Redwoods are among the fastest growing trees on earth, and Giants Grove at Birr Castle, Co Offaly, www.giantsgrove.ie is an optimum site for them in which to reach their full potential. In the right conditions these trees can grow well over 1.5m in height and 2cm in girth every year and they grow faster every year as they get older.

All of us here in the Giants Grove Project are doing the least maintenance needed so we can see just how big our Giants can get!

Sean McGinnis, Maintenance manager of Giants Grove, is from Ecoplan Forestry Ltd, Banagher, Co Offaly

Dedicating to past and future generations

Giants Grove 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 project includes an under-storey of native Irish trees, holly, rowan and spindle for biodiversity and extra visual interest.

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 co-ordinate within the Grove, identified on your certificate.





An upcycled student dorm bed is now a thriving flower bed
All pictures by
DIARMUID HEALY

LIVING BY THE BOOKS

Coming to the autumn of his years, GER CLARKE contemplates tidying the shelves of his study and his mind

When confronted by a question or an unusual request I invariably go to the converted box-room now known as The Study. Not for me the smart phone or the google search. I prefer it the hard way: hard copy, that is. Paper and books, atlases and thesaurus, dictionaries, journals and notebooks accumulated over a lifetime of reading, writing and research, gathered from secondhand bookstores, auctions, libraries and friendly donations.

About 2,000 of them cram the shelves of the room. Orderly at first, they now lie in all sorts of geometric patterns, some replaced carefully, others jammed back in haste as the search for the right tome continued. Arranged, loosely, by topic or interest they tell the story of my developing life from teenage years onwards. They also show how my interests have broadened and

deepened. Science Fiction and Fantasy, Classics and Fiction, Science, Art, Archaeology, Cooking, Travel, Philosophy and Theology. Gardening and Landscape dominate currently.

Photo collections, art materials and rock/mineral collections and ancient fossils and arrowheads are plonked in various niches. They are very popular with the grandchildren. Microscope and telescope and books on Astronomy compete for space and attention.

All cheek by jowl, thrust onto shelves, not always neatly but generally in their own section. Jack Reacher lying up against Frodo and *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* lying down beside *The Wind in the Willows*. One son is mad into sporting biographies, but they're not for me. How can someone not yet 30 write a book about their life?

My poetic efforts are often scribbled on the back pages of books or on paper scraps, hidden in odd books to be found years later, unexpectedly, and revised

About 2,000 items of reading material cram the shelves of The Study



or rewritten totally only to be cached again, for posthumous retrieval by one of my sons, I expect.

Looking at the room

I see

The floor – wooden floorboards

The shelves – timber

The door – wooden

The books – processed wood

I am taken by the presence of trees in my life and know now that they have always been my mainstay and support.

Looking out through the window, I see the garden and know it has over 40 species of tree planted in it. And it is also arranged in a like manner with little pockets – shelf spaces, if you like – for orchard, woodland, windbreak, formal garden, secret garden. Not so secret anymore since we removed the leylandii, but soon to be replaced by a box hedge. Oh, and the hospice for the trees and shrubs I have rescued from

plant nursery and garden-centre skips.

I suppose an upbringing in North Mayo with roots in the Céide Fields area west of Ballycastle and a youth in Ballina helped in the development of a passion for reading, writing and closeness to nature. My mother's greatest treat was to be brought to the seaside and to smell again the sea and the wrack as it was being tumbled along Ballycastle beach. Personally, I recall the River Moy and the roar of the waters as they fell over the weirs in Ardnaree.

Muigheo, Mayo, the Plain of the Yew Trees. Ballina, Beal Artha an Fheadha, the mouth of the ford where the woods come down.

Those woods (Beleek) were the setting for many scout hikes and days mitching from secondary school. Days spent exploring and building huts. I came across my first bamboo wood there and have loved bamboo ever since. While living in France years later, I took time to visit the Bambouserie near the Pont du Gard and saw the 160-year-old garden created by another bamboo lover.

Since then I have worked with Sally McKenna, an American artist now living in the West. She created a Tree of Life sculpture using bamboo from the Philippines as part of the overall piece and set it up here in the grounds of Dalgan Park near Navan.

So, where does that leave me now? Older, yet fully committed to trees, to reading, to encouraging a love of Nature and most importantly to learning to be happy with my lot. To see the last 60+ years of my life as a work in progress. To sit mindfully in our Zen garden and watch all the different birds as they live out their story among the trees, to wait until the last blackbird has called and all is silent, waiting for the first bat to patrol the





One section is for the authors I would have liked to have met: Poe, Twain, Cormac McCarthy, RL Stevenson (I walked in his footsteps in France, just didn't have a donkey).

The result of all this reminiscing is that, firstly, I have had to tidy the shelves and restore some books to their proper places. I have also noted the absence of some, loaned out and never returned. It convinces me, though, that I have to declutter, and I also have to declutter the study. Maybe we are deciduous too. Coming to the autumn of our

As for my study, well, I think we might just relocate to our woodland area. We have a nice flower bed there and I can sit and watch the birds and the bees all the evenings left to me, studying.

Fulfilling promises made



Crann – Trees for Ireland director George Cunningham offered two wonderfully different prizes in the Crann Christmas draw. First

prize, an offer to travel at his own expense anywhere in Ireland to give a talk to a nominated group on 'Tree Books, Tree Travels and Tree Lore'. Second prize, a collection of new books, valued in excess of €250, couriered to anywhere in Ireland.

That first prize was won by Tony Gahan of Kilcullen who nominated the lovely Kildare town, Kilcullen, and Kilcullen 700 for the venue for the talk. And along with giving the talk in the beautifully-adapted cinema (full cinema screen and plush Volvo leather seats), George presented Kilcullen 700 with 25 native

saplings for planting along the River Liffey.

Orla Farrell of easie-treesie/Crann travelled from north Dublin to fly the Crann flag. She reported:

What a terrific evening that was!

With the driving rain I was afraid nobody would come out on such a terrible night but it was a brilliant turnout and in such a beautiful theatre and heritage centre. Everyone I spoke to after the event with my cup of tea spoke so highly of the talk, how interesting it was and how wide-ranging. And they were such a

knowledgeable audience: one person who not only had been on the particular small Pacific island in one of George's slides but knew the actual tree and had eaten its very fruit!"

Many were delighted to re-connect with Crann and were thrilled to receive some of



our recent magazines. Some had them at home already and others said they must re-join. We had lots of interesting discussions following the talk with the many people who turned out, so many of them doing great work themselves.

One lady had planted trees on every corner of her extensive lands though she was dismayed to report that despite all this the wildlife had decreased substantially on her property since she moved there 25 years ago and fears it may be due to all the local spraying going on.

Geraldine Gahan, who organised the venue, wrote to George Cunningham:

Well, I have heard nothing but praise today for your efforts last night. Everyone who was there really enjoyed your talk and those who weren't there now regret it! Brian Byrne did a good write-up in the local on-line paper, A Kilcullen Diary, complete with photos. Here is the link: <https://kilcullenbridge.blogspot.com/2019/03/a-journey-through-trees-of-ireland-and.html>

It was a shame that the awful weather



kept so many people at home but we have no control over that. Thank you so much for delivering such an enjoyable talk and to Crann for offering an unusual and very worthwhile prize.

John K Brownlee of Dun Laoghaire was the winner of the second prize and the books were duly dispatched to him. His thank-you note says it all:

The parcel of books arrived at 1:50pm and the courier kindly offered to carry it up to my level at First Floor. Having tried to lift it myself without success, I gladly accepted; in fact, it was only after I had unpacked about 60% that I could lift it without straining!

I counted 28 books. What variety, not just about trees – gardening, tourism, history, fiction, humour, art, cooking and more!

Some are just up my street, some I will display here for reference and some I will offer to my friends.

Thanks to George and Crann for this fabulous prize.

Above: George Cunningham (right) with Orla Farrell and the winner of first prize in the draw, Tony Gahan, in Kilcullen Heritage Centre

Left: Others at the Kilcullen talk by George Cunningham of Crann – Trees for Ireland

Inset: The former cinema with the Volvo seats!

Pictures:
A Kilcullen Diary

Crann – Trees for Ireland Christmas Fundraising Draw 2018 Results

1st Prize: Illustrated talk on 'Tree Travels and Tree Books' by Crann Director Dr George Cunningham, to aid any organisation, nominated by prizewinner, all expenses included.
Tony Gahan, Kilcullen Bridge House, Kilcullen, Co. Kildare

2nd Prize: A wonderful variety box of books worth in excess of €250 couriered to any Irish address. Sponsored by Crann Director Dr George Cunningham, Roscrea.
John K Brownlee, 8 Hibernia, De Vesci Court, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin.

3rd Prize: An overnight stay in the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Dundalk, Co. Louth for 2 people with Dinner, Bed & Breakfast. www.cpireland.com
Lucy Mooney, 243 North Circular Road, Dublin, 7.

4th Prize: Family Pass for 4 - Fun for all the family at Tayto Park. Tayto Park, Kilbrew, Ashbourne, Co. Meath www.taytopark.ie
Phyllis O'Connor, The Barn, Kilcop Lower, Woodstown, Co. Waterford.

5th Prize: €100 Voucher for Flynn's Nurseries and Garden Centre, Summerhill, Co Meath
Patrick Murphy, Windtown, Gaybrook, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath.

6th Prize: 3m high European Walnut, Juglans regia Matt Fogarty's Tree Farm, Ballinderry, Nenagh. Delivered within a 30 miles radius; otherwise arrangements made for its collection.

Joseph Tuohy, Grange House, Holycross, Thurles, Co. Tipperary.

7th Prize: A case of 6 bottles of wine. Sponsored by Crann Director, Mark Wilkinson
Brian Gleeson, Monarus, Borrisbeg, Templemore, Co. Tipperary.

8th Prize: Family (2+2) Pass for 4 Visits to Belvedere - Valid for use up to 31/12/2019 Belvedere House, Gardens & Park, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath www.belvedere-house.ie
Marcella Clarke, Stroane, Buttersbridge, Co. Cavan.

9th Prize: Family (2+2) Pass for 4 Visits to Belvedere - Valid for use up to 31/12/2019 Belvedere House, Gardens & Park, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath www.belvedere-house.ie
Kate Bunworth, 8 Parnell Road, Dublin, 12.

10th Prize: Family (2+2) Pass for 4 Visits to Belvedere - Valid for use up to 31/12/2019 Belvedere House, Gardens & Park, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath www.belvedere-house.ie
Jolanda van Herk, Boughtiduff, Ballaghaderreen, Co. Roscommon.

11th Prize: Family Day Pass for Rathbeggan Lakes, including Token for Activities Rathbeggan Lakes, Dunshaughlin, Co. Meath www.rathbegganlakes.com
Frank O'Meara, Grange West, Kinnafad, Edenderry, Co. Offaly.

12th Prize: Quercus palustris Green Pillar - Swamp Oak Tree (delivery nationwide) Johnstown Garden Centre, Naas, Co. Kildare. www.johnstowngardencentre.ie
William Swords, Eshowe, Sandyhill, Charlestown, Co. Mayo.

13th Prize: Wine Hamper from O'Briens Wine Off-Licence, collect from preferred O'Brien's store. O'Briens Wine Off-Licence Group has 34 stores nationwide. www.obrienswine.ie

Eamon Holohan, Bawnmore, Killeshin Road, Carlow.

14th Prize: €30 Voucher for Cappagh Nurseries and Garden Centre. Tinnakilly Lower, Aughrim, Co Wicklow, Y14 HF65 www.vanderwel.ie

Pamela McAree, 8 Corbawn Grove, Shankill, Dublin 18.

15th Prize: €30 voucher for Milltown Garden Centre, Roscrea Road, Shinrone, Birr, Co. Offaly. www.milltowngardencentre.com
John Ryan, Kilcock Men's Shed, Church Street, Kilcock, Co. Kildare.

16th Prize: International bestselling book 'The Hidden Life of Trees' by Peter Wohlleben Sponsored by Crann Director Diarmuid McAree
Danny Browne, 8 St. Patrick's Tce., An Togher, Roscommon.

Congratulations to all of the winners.

Thank you to all of our members, friends and sponsors for supporting this fundraising draw.

We really appreciate your efforts and generosity.

Minister for Communications,
Climate Action and Environment
Richard Bruton and Mayor Mary
McCamley plant the last tree in
the children's first woodland on
World Environment Day, a tree
for every one of Ireland's 3,305
primary schools



CONFESSIONS OF A TREE ZEALOT

ORLA FARRELL gives us an insight into the frenzied world of a crusader for planting trees

To paraphrase a certain supermodel, I would prefer not to be waking up to plant less than 1,000 trees any day!

I'm leading the Irish project to plant 1m trees with Ireland's 1m children by 2023. The project, backed by the United Nations, is up and running in 67 countries now and is co-ordinated by the Plant-for-the-Planet Trillion Tree project in Germany.

We started two years ago by running a Tree Academy in the school where I had run the Green Committee by planting 300 trees in our local park in the prescribed German way; in 105 minutes (check) with help from the Council (Fingal Operations Department team, check) and some volunteers. This effort was the high point of a day where we heard presentations from the two UK schoolgirls who had already attended these Climate Conferences for children and explained the need for this action to the assembled 50 new Climate Ambassadors.

We had had a lot of success in the past, planting trees within our school grounds with help from ecologist Dale Treadwell who has been working on our schools' programme in Crann for many years. One lovely stand of 200 native trees shelters the Senior building from all the noise and traffic of the M50 extension going by. The other, newer Tiny Forest replaced lawn at the entrance to the Junior school with apple, pear, cherry and a roll-call of Irish native trees, one planted by our Minister

for Education and one by the County Chief Executive who came to show their support!

I guess I would be still working away in that lovely school near Bayside DART station in Dublin if it weren't for the fact that we ran out of tree-space. We found the German trillion-tree project while doing research for the Eco-UNESCO annual competition and we were dazzled by its scale. (I add, we won the trophy in our class, in its 'Local to Global' section of the competition.) This was only one of a slew of awards our school was to win as we expanded our tree-planting endeavours. We were winning so many that, in fact, we pulled out of several last year as we had so many

award ceremonies to attend that they had started to take over! One such award, presented to us by Dublin's Lord Mayor, was where we made a film with the Tree Council on Ireland's 28 native trees. We stood in front of each one of them as Éanna Ni Lamhna described their interesting features. That took a bit of running around between the Botanic Gardens, our own school grounds and St Anne's Park. This proved to be a useful reference for us as we now had a handy list of our native trees. Also, having learned more about the importance of diversity for woodland health and making provision for climate change, we have learned about our more recent arrivals too. Beech, lime and maples, horse chestnut and even sycamore

were all on our planting list this year, for their usefulness as pollinators. But I am getting ahead of myself.

A visit to the UK project of Wendy Davis – my UK counterpart and another teacher



Orla Farrell
is a Board
Member of
Crann – Trees
for Ireland

*'I decided to quit
teaching seven years
early and to Stop
Talking Start Planting'*



– proved most enlightening. With 25 local schools, Andover Trees had a planting programme where each November 1,000 trees were added to their magnificent local parkland, an extension to the Jubilee Forest. Their model was very popular in the town; the ground was prepared in advance with the holes dug by machine, children would come on a weekday with their teachers and special needs assistants and received help from local volunteers. Having been a teacher myself since 1981, I realised that something magical was happening at Harmony Woods, the name the children had given to their English project. Incidentally, you will not be surprised to hear that they too beat a regular path to London collecting environmental awards, their favourite one coming from Dr Jane Goodall, the renowned environmental campaigner.

Now that we had the contact details of all the relevant people in Fingal, we thought to expand our small corner near a stream. What were the chances of finding space for another 3,000 trees in 2018?

The thing to realise, firstly, is that our project helps with so many national objectives and it is a project very welcome to the councils. As a former Dublin City Councillor myself, I know that those in charge of the parks seldom have all the resources they would like, so a project like ours ticks many boxes for these hard-pressed departments. To our delight we got an enthusiastic yes! The German model stresses the importance of inclusion so off we went to explain what we were up to at some neighbouring schools. With careful co-ordination we soon had interest from our nearest primary school across the park, the hospital school, the Church of Ireland school in Sutton, the Community School and the girls' secondary school. We were off! Two of the schools were so keen on the project that they ran planting ceremonies in their own school; in St Mary's, an oak to celebrate their 50th anniversary and in St Nessan's, 180 saplings to encourage the bees!

On World Environment Day in June of last year, we planted the last trees to make up our first woodland, with a tree for each of Ireland's 3,305 primary schools. If each one could plant 300 like we had done the year before, that would be the million! How hard could it be?

The children of our green school committee came up with the name: 'easy treesie'. We wanted to capture the ease and fun of spending a few minutes planting a tree beside where you live, letting Mother Nature do the rest and watching it grow. By planting according to our mantra in Crann and on the Tree Council, 'The Right Tree in the Right Place', very little else



is required for nature to take over. After all, around 80pc of our land mass was covered with native trees, all happily looking after themselves before humans came along.

The Plant-for-the-Planet model of Saturday Tree Academies is an excellent one which we have enjoyed running. Even if we ran an academy every single Saturday, however, a million trees would need more than just a day a week. We all agreed the UK model was very suited to Irish children whose Saturdays, unlike in many other countries, are often very filled with sport, music and other worthwhile pursuits. Tree planting ticks so many boxes in our school curriculum it seemed very suited to tackling it on a weekday. Teachers, I know from experience, rarely have the energy at the end of the day to be ringing councils looking for land or ringing tree nurseries asking for trees; what if someone could pull it together? I decided to quit teaching seven years early and 'Stop Talking Start Planting'.

If – to paraphrase, again, a popular beverage – did jobs, they would do my job! I get to visit schools all the time (all six in Malahide on the first day of February, I recall, as well as a visit to our site before coffee time!) but when a bell goes, I can have a second cup of tea in the staff room as the children are organised. We get VIP treatment in the Park where rangers and head gardeners escort us round as we pick the most suitable sites in glorious spots such as the Green Flag Parks of Malahide and Newbridge House demesnes. There have been a multitude of

invitations to explain our project, best of all in Dublin Castle to the Biodiversity Conference where our Crann patron President Michael D Higgins had words of encouragement for us. The children are delighted when so many celebrities come to our events to show their support. At Halloween one awestruck tiny witch, painted green, studied the Mayor, resplendent in his gleaming chain of office and asked him was he the real Mayor or was he just

'We can fit 300 saplings in the space of about six parked cars'



Orla Farrell in Monaco at the launch of the trillion tree project with Plant-for-the-Planet's UN-backed team

Right top: Applause from Mayor Anthony Lavin (left) for some of the many Scouting Association of Ireland trillion-tree planters at the easy-treesie/Crann Academy at Malahide. This troop planted 1,919 trees to celebrate the founding year of Malahide Sea Scouts.



Spreading the love: Christmas tree mulch bark is applied to Coillte's 1,000 saplings with the easy-treesie/Crann project at Paddy's Hill, Portmarnock

dressed up as the Mayor!

And when the dignitaries come, the media follow. We have had great media interest. We have been interviewed on the Ryan Tubridy Show and on RTÉ Junior, as well as featuring in local papers and radio. When we had a big article in *the paper* (the Examiner, of course) on January 1 this year, well we knew we were onto something big! Next we had a request for an invite by the TV crews! Check out our planting parties with RTÉ, going for 1m trees by 2023 with Ireland's 1m children is a challenge they were eager to see. In Cork <https://vimeo.com/320267562>, in Dublin on News2Day <https://vimeo.com/330463722>, and on the Today Show with Máire and Dáithí, <https://vimeo.com/321932425>.

We have planted trees this season from Enniskillen with the Rotary Club to Listowel's Town Park, from Paddy's Hill in Portmarnock to right under Knocknarea, Sligo. Six counties have funded projects as well as the local authority Water and Communities Board, the Community Foundation for Ireland and tech company Sales Force. The response to requests for volunteers has been superb. Parents and

grandparents love the invitation to a planting party and it is a special joy to hear of the many children with no gardens having their first chance to enjoy some contact with the earth. Often the children can find it quite alarming; we had infants reporting with shock that they had discovered snakes when they had a first encounter with some earthworms. We love to have plenty of adults along: the day becomes a community festival. Business people relish a chance to get into the fresh air, as when the Siemens Healthineers from Swords came in force to assist; they knew an opportunity for healthy local engagement and we were delighted to offer them a couple of hours helping three classes extend a native hedgerow near their manufacturing facility. In Fermoy, Co Cork, we have teamed up with the beekeepers and the Tidy Towns to offer the Gaelscoil and Bishop Murphy School the chance to enhance a local roadside which is now an avenue of lime trees. On Harper's Island Wetland Centre we

joined with Birdwatch Ireland to enhance the habitat by adding shelter trees with berries and nuts and engaged in some bird watching to round the day off nicely.

One of my favourite parts of the planting party is, well, frankly the party. Hot drinks and a treat for everyone to round off the activity as we congratulate ourselves on our (easy) work.

"The children are delighted when so many celebrities come to our events"

The German project delights in powering its tree planters with hazelnut chocolate so we knew we were adopting this idea above all others.

We are very grateful to all our supporters for funding our project. Any army, as we all know, marches on its stomach so we make a point of there being a little snack after every work-parade.

We, of course, incur expenses. It's not always possible for the children to walk to the site and we have sometimes had to pay for a bus. Coillte and the councils have been hugely generous with our allocation of saplings. We do use our sponsorship to pay for some root ball



All hands on deck planting the first 300 trees at Bayside DART station at the easy-treesie/Crann Tree Academy as Ireland joins 67 countries worldwide in a challenge

Below: Diarmuid McAree of Crann – Trees for Ireland regales the capacity crowd with his tree poetry and address during the easy-treesie/Crann Culture Night Film, Art and Tree Planting event at Dr Steevens' Hospital, Dublin

and potted trees for special occasions. Setting up the project with spades, trowels and gloves has cost money. When it comes to the snacks we have gone to local suppliers and looked for some sponsorship. We have encountered such generosity! We like to go to whoever is local. In December our planting season started on the week decreed by UCD Forestry Department, just before Christmas. We called it a Christmas Tree Party. On a day with strong sea breezes and heavy showers, the Gourmet Food Parlour at the foot of the Paddy's Hill near Malahide made us all hot chocolate and fresh warm cookies, which charmed the children and warmed them up as they sheltered from rain before boarding the bus. At our planting event in Newbridge House, the Coach House café at Donabate had home-made brownies for us and the children got to sip Lusk apple juice before going back to their school, where they are planting one tree per child on their grounds. At Clontarf Hospital, children from Belgrove school were 'tree-ted' to trestle tables laden with healthy snacks of apple juice, popcorn and more home-made buns when they added 50 trees to the garden. When the children of Gaelscoil Bhaile Munna planted a tree for each pupil in their school at Santry Demesne, the nearby Crowne Plaza rewarded them all with pots of fruits-of-the-forest. Butlers are a great support and what a tree-mendous Easter week it was, planting powered by 250 bars of their finest



chocolate. In East Cork we had the wonderful Bird Hide to host our Ballymaloe Brack Picnic with – surprise – its own chocolate bars.

Now that we are winding down after the bare root season, the first task is to send big thank yous to our myriad supporters, the huge numbers of volunteers with a special mention to the Scout leaders, the Swords Woodland Association and the Student group of the Afforestation Project as well as my family and friends and, of course, my extraordinary fellow members of Crann who have been stalwart helpers, supporters and advisers.

What next? Well as before it starts with designating the public land. Once that is done then the local schools are generally delighted

to come and help out. We would love to hear from people working in or connected with Parks Departments, public hospitals or local authorities where a corner or more may be available to plant in the coming seasons. We can fit 300 saplings in the space of about six parked cars.

We also welcome sponsorship. You can sponsor a tree on this project for €10 or one on www.crann.ie and why not match it with €1 for a tree in Mexico on www.Plant-for-the-Planet.com and offset some of the carbon you use when you burn dirty fuels.

We have reached the 15,000 tree mark this year. Be part of the solution for global overheating and biodiversity collapse!

Go on, Go on, Go on!

Karen Ciesielski, the new IEN CEO



Michael Ewing's successor, Karen Ciesielski, spells it out for Crann

By PADDY SMITH

WE welcome the new Chief Executive Officer of the Irish Environmental Network (IEN), Karen Ciesielski, who took up duty in May. She replaces Michael Ewing whose job title was Coordinator.

We asked Karen to help us with the pronunciation of her surname – and this is what she replied: “I’ve never seen a phonetic pronunciation of my name before so this is an interesting exercise! I think this is probably the closest: Chu-zel-skee.”

Michael Ewing, who lives near Boyle, Co Roscommon, warmly welcomed Karen to the community of the IEN and offered his “support in as much as she may want it.”

Previously, Karen worked at Focus Ireland as Public Fundraising Manager where she oversaw large-scale public awareness and fundraising campaigns since December 2016.

Throughout her career, she worked with rights-based and social justice

organisations, including the US Public Interest Research Group, the Irish Hospice Foundation and the Irish Council for Civil Liberties, where she served as the Head of External Development for ten years and was involved in a range of human rights campaigns, including the Yes Equality Referendum Campaign in 2015.

“I am a firm believer in a thriving, dynamic civil society sector and in the power of impacting social change through collective action,” she says, adding that she looks forward to continuing the work of the IEN and its member organisations as a powerful voice for the environment in Ireland.

The IEN is an umbrella network that works to support environmental NGOs through access to funding and services. It consists of environmental NGOs that carry out their work through practical conservation work, campaigning, lobbying and raising public awareness of environmental and conservation needs. Its members include Crann – Trees for Ireland.

Open Photographic Competition 2019

Our annual photographic competition, sponsored by Coillte, attracted another record entry last year. Standards were very high and we look forward to receiving equally good images for this year's contest.

Theme: **Trees, Hedgerows & Woodlands**

Closing Date: **13th October, 2019**

Sponsored By: **Coillte**

First Prize **€250**,

Second Prize **€100**,

Third Prize **€50**

ENTRY IS FREE!

Digital entries should be emailed to

CrannCoillte2019@gmail.com

Prints should be posted to **Crann – Trees for Ireland, Photo Competition, Crann, PO Box 860, Celbridge, Co Kildare.**

RULES

- This competition is open to all amateur photographers.
- Entries can be digital (emailed) or prints (posted).
- Emailed images must be in jpg/jpeg format, minimum file size 2MB, maximum file size 8MB.
- NOTE: Emailed entries must be as attachments to the email (not embedded in email).
- Prints of photos should be minimum size 6x4 inches (15x10cm) up to maximum size A4.
- A certain amount of manipulation of digital images to enhance the subject matter is allowed but gimmicky special effects are not.
- Each photographer may submit up to 3 entries.
- Prints should have the following information on the back: Name, Address, Telephone Number, Email Address, Title of Print, Location and Date Taken.
- Prints should NOT be mounted.
- Prints cannot be returned.
- Emails should have the following information: Name, Address, Telephone Number, Email Address, Title of Picture, Location and Date Taken.
- The copyright of the image remains the photographer's. However, Crann and Coillte retain the right to use any images in future publications and on related social media and websites e.g. Crann may use some of the competition pictures in related third party publications, tweets, website, social media and promotional literature like calendars. You may be requested to supply the images in high resolution eps/jpeg format for this purpose.
- Entering this competition implies full and whole acceptance of the competition rules.
- The judge's decision will be final and no correspondence or communications will be entered into in relation to the results.

Phone cameras

We have a special section for phone camera photographs.

Entries should be emailed to CrannCoillte2018@gmail.com, with the words 'Phone camera' entered in the subject line.

The winner will receive a special prize of €50.

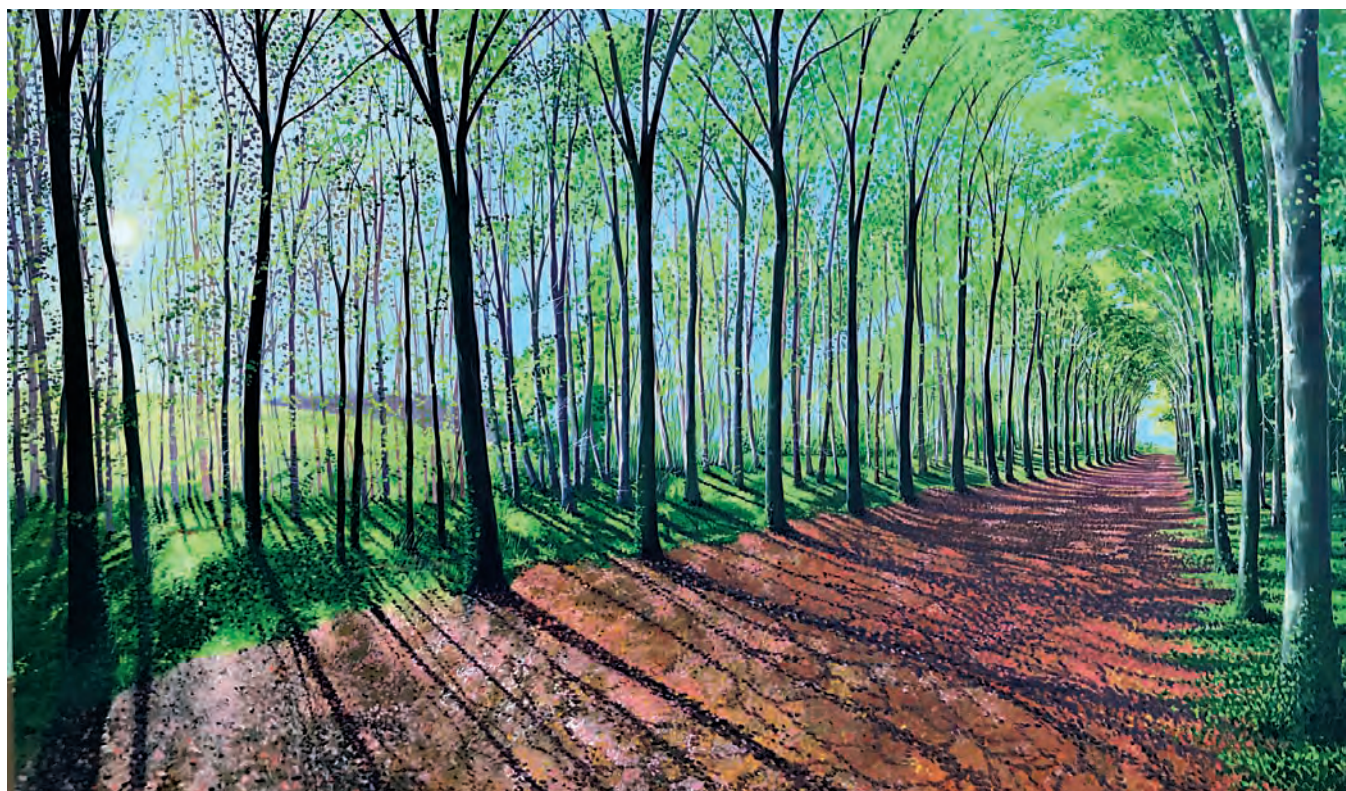


LEARNING HOW TO PAINT



The beauty about painting trees is that you always have subject matter

— *from the trees themselves!*



Trees have single-handedly taught me how to paint, says Debbie Baxter

It took me some time to realise that actually I had been painting trees all my life. It wasn't until 2015 that I consciously chose to call my genre 'treescapes'.

When I look back over my life as an artist, trees have always been in the frame. The beauty about painting trees is that I always have subject matter. I only have to roam and this country will offer up the most wonderful variety. It is also personally the best possible way to experience the seasons: through trees.

The woodland has always been a magical place for me. As a child I grew up surrounded by forest. A jump over the garden fence, one field and I would be happily dragging my feet through dead leaves and climbing an old oak for a better view.

Trees have been my haven for all things: play, re-balancing and inspiration. When I paint them now I am always looking to paint the earthy magic I feel when I am wandering around in Nature.

Wonderfully, this passion is not an isolated affair. In 2018, a friendly BBC researcher contacted me and asked if I would be happy to do a short piece on my work for Countryfile. I took the producer for a walk around a beautiful local estate near where I live called Wandlebury.

"Let me paint for you a

DEBBIE BAXTER writes
about her life as a full-time
creative

'treescape' here," I said and those six minutes of film footage allowed me to show the UK my paintings and find others that shared my passion. It also helped me then to go on and create an exciting relationship with Wandlebury and the charity that looks after this estate called Past Present And Future.

Wandlebury is an oasis of tree varieties in a desert of agriculture in Cambridge. This is my go-to place to sit, draw, walk and breath fresh air. Shortly I will be running open-air painting classes, with a talk about my journey through

trees and a solo exhibition at the end of the summer in the grounds here.

However, in order to keep my creative juices flowing I really like to travel. Earlier in the year I took myself to South Devon and sought out the most magnificent moss-covered oaks that surround the Dart river and its tributaries. I will now be painting these for the up-coming exhibition at the end of August 2019.

Building a relationship with Nature and its flora means a lot to me. I wanted to find a way to express this, not just through painting, so with the help of a poet we have created a coffee-table book with over 40 paintings and poems that really celebrate this unusual love affair I have with trees. This will be published at the end of April.

I think the single thing about being a treescape artist is that the 'Trees' have been my creative teacher from the word go. They have single-handedly taught me how to paint, how to live and how to be creative. Interesting because not once have they ever said one word!



Trees have always been in the frame for Debbie Baxter

More information about Debbie Baxter's work and new ventures (and sign up to her monthly Newsletter) at

www.artdbaxter.com. Or email debbiebaxterart@yahoo.co.uk



A multi-stemmed oak
recovering after breakage
Opposite:
Figure 1
A *Cedrus atlantica* would be an
expensive loss



Michael Yallop works for a local authority on the “tree crew”, undertaking general arbour work of pruning and felling large to small park and street trees. He came from the private side of arboriculture/horticulture before recently joining the council, having previously worked at tree surveying and tree surgery and landscaping.

Street tree vandalism and rejuvenation

MICHAEL YALLOP loves to take broken trees under his wing and see what they can become

I RECENTLY read an article by Dr Duncan Slater (Slater, 2018) in which he talked about what happens to pruning wounds years after the cut has been made. As my interest lies in the science-based side of arboriculture, it captured my attention. One particular point that stood out for me was the rejuvenation of the young street tree after it had been snapped out (i.e. the top broken off the tree).

This is an issue I deal with in my work. I had been involved in the planting of new trees in parks and housing estates; unfortunately some of these were to replace already broken trees. I say ‘unfortunately’ because, for example, at the time of writing, a variety of trees had just been planted and, overnight, some had been broken. Even in that short space of time vandals had wreaked havoc on our newly-planted trees.

A New tree, a new target

Each year the council plants many many trees to replace trees removed from parks, open spaces and streets. Many of these are snapped out or the top is broken off, even right after being planted. Often the council’s approach can be to dig up and remove

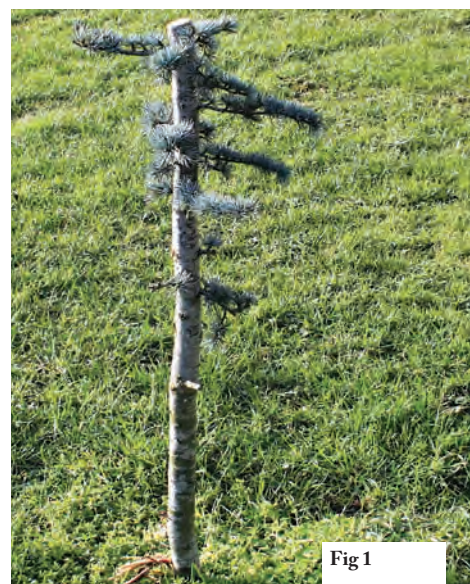


Fig 1

the remains of the tree, be it alive or dead. In many cases a tree that is removed is not replaced due to the continued threat of ongoing damage. It’s fair enough to assume such as it would be a pointless exercise to keep doing so in certain cases. It is very common to drive around estates and see trees broken. Little is

done on the follow-up to find a culprit.

Changing the method of staking can help defeat the problem of vandalism. With a single stake, the tree can be broken between chest to waste height. Even double and treble staking doesn't always work. The problem is that the vandal uses the stakes as steps to climb up and hang off or pull from the tree in order to break it.

Damage to trees can be in any area. In her paper on tree vandalism, Kunzler, 2017 mentions the obvious mindless vandalism but also for the reason that a tree is blocking a view or disputes between home-owners/neighbours. What I commonly come across is simply vandalism. An individual or group of people passing a tree may feel that it would be better if it was shorter (if only they knew the truth!).

Many trees are snapped shortly after planting and their location (i.e. park or housing estate) doesn't matter. The aggravated problem here is that trees such as the *Cedrus atlantica* in Figure 1 are an expensive loss. If many trees are lost on a street then the cost adds up.

Pathways and high-to-medium usage areas are the common spots for damage. Areas where people pass through late at night can give cover, an ideal situation for unwanted pruning. Cul de sacs and some older estates just don't have these issues in high percentages.

Rejuvenation: take it or leave it

On closer examination of vandalised trees, we see that in most cases the main leader is snapped out. The tree is usually snapped low on the main stem, taking the majority of the branches or crown with it. Not great odds for survival. In other cases we have branch damage where the main stem is not broken but significant damage is caused to the branches/crown or to the bark.

A lot of what I'm talking about is stem and branch breakage. It is most common in small trees but in a small number of cases we get bark damage to medium to large trees: ring barking or taking slices off the side to cause damage to the tree.

Dr Slater mentioned in his article (Slater, 2018) that a street tree he came across had been completely snapped out. He began minor formative pruning and over time maintained the tree to create good form and a balanced crown. In Dublin, the picture of the broken lime (*Tilia spp*) in Figure 2 shows it has been broken at about the height of the stake, which acted as the fulcrum. The tree has grown new shoots off the side since it was broken, and we



Fig 5

can see that some shoots will have possibilities for the future.

These type of shoots allowed Dr Slater to prune his tree to form a new crown. In 10 years, the tree, which was 1.5 metres tall with no branches, grew to about 10 metres with a healthy crown and with good forming structure. Over this period he intervened three times.

The Parks Department have come across a number of damaged trees in one particular park; oaks (*Quercus spp*) and cherries (*Prunus spp*), all in one area, were damaged. The cherries (an example seen in Figure 3) were dug up and placed in a small wooded area. Unfortunately little pruning was done and they were left to their own devices. Nonetheless they came on surprisingly well to form a tree of some value

to the woodland. The oaks (*Quercus spp*) in Figures 4-6 were close to a path and were left in place, and they regrew with an adequate crown. As the tree grows, it will become clearer to its suitability for the future.

Unfortunately, a tree to be left in a streetscape needs maintenance because as it matures we cannot be assured of the security of the tree's structure. The larger *Pinus wallichiana* (Figure 7) sustained some damage to branches when it was young. Although the main stem was not snapped, severe damage was caused to it but it has recovered well. The lower-growing branch should have been removed when the tree was younger. Formative pruning would have helped. It will take a long time for this tree to regrow into something that resembles a decent tree. In a lot of cases this is not always feasible



Figure 5
An oak that had snapped out and has a reformed crown
Right top:
Figure 3
A bad union on a woodland cherry
Right bottom:
Figure 2
A broken lime tree



Fig 3



Fig 2

as we want instant effect from the tree, not a branchless-looking stick.

Time is an issue in getting someone to go back and take care of these trees, especially where there are many trees. The likes of the *Cedrus atlantica* (Figure 1), which is in a park setting, can be hard to get to re-grow. Its location in the park allows for experimentation to allow it to continue growing and to see how it develops. It can be easily removed at a later stage, if necessary. This tree was planted on its own and was to become a specimen tree within the park. Was being on its own the issue? Was the tree stake an attraction or was it just broken because they could.

Black, 1978, said that going back as far as 1978 they were abandoning the use of twin stakes and cross-bars in Washington. I would

agree here as it makes a platform for the vandal to stand on. From our own research it seems that the tree stake can attract the culprit to the tree. The new post does stand out. Having planted trees with stakes and some without, a higher percentage of non-staked were less vandalised. But this is ok in areas of shade from high winds. Left alone, your new tree could be toppled.

Trying to reduce the problem

I doubt that tree vandalism will ever go away, but I am convinced that we can minimise the issue. It is a broad area to cover. We need to start by making more people aware of the issue and aware of the importance of trees in the community. Working with schools to liaise with the teachers and students is important, educating from a young age with the concept

that the area around young people is their own and that damaging trees is harming no one but themselves. The wonderful effects a tree has on our environment and for our wildlife is also important to highlight. Great work is being done by Crann – Trees for Ireland, Trees for Schools, The Tree Council of Ireland, local authorities and many others. Without their efforts, the problem would be much greater.

Is there a way we can practically help to combat the issue? The less obvious the newly-planted tree is to the passers-by could be one way of helping to limit damage. Single-staking as much as possible can avoid making pull points. It would be great in the early years for street trees if we could use tree guards but unfortunately costs do not always allow that. We can't spend our days and nights driving



Fig 6

Figure 6
Reformed oak
Below: Figure 7
This *Pinus wallichiana* has recovered well from severe damage in its youth

around to watch each tree, so we must get the community involved to keep an eye on new trees.

On my travels around planting street trees, I meet people who want a tree outside their house and others who don't. Feedback from some home-owners is: "Well, if you replace the tree will it attract more anti-social behaviour outside my house?" So, making contact with the householder is hugely important before planting. There is no point in planting a tree in a place with a high possibility of harm ("The right tree in the right place").

My plan for the broken trees that I have come across is to take them under my wing and see what they can become. I live by the idea that you can take a tree away at any time with ease but it is very hard to put it back, so I prune them and look after them. Maybe in time they will become something of value. Another interesting tree to watch will be the *Cedrus atlantica* and how it will grow: an experiment going forward into the future.



Fig 7

Many criticise Dr Alex Shigo but I still see him as the father of modern arboriculture so I will finish with something he once said: "Education starts when you doubt something, Education occurs when you resolve your doubts."

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Michael Yallop is a BSc (Hons) Hort, ISA Certified Arborist, Tech arbor A and ISA Professional Member.

60-year love affair with trees brings RDS honour to Matt

By PADDY SMITH

One of the most interesting people in the tree sector, Matt Fogarty, was honoured recently in the highly-regarded RDS Spring Awards which have a prize fund of €23,000.

The Co Tipperary man from near Ballinderry, Nenagh, was runner-up (to Coillte's Cratloe Woods, Co Limerick) in the RDS/Forest Service Multipurpose Forestry Award and a large number of his extended family were on hand to see him accept his award in the RDS.

Matt is a past vice-president of Crann (when we used those titles) and is a long-time fan of our organisation.

The judges' notes stated: What started as a hobby with Matt planting his first tree back in 1957 has developed into labour of love over the past 60 years. Matt gradually started moving from farming into forestry in the early 1980s and expanded and developed a woodland of up to 20 hectares, and over one hundred different species of mainly hardwood trees. As well as timber production, Matt also actively manages his woodland with several other objectives in mind including landscape enhancement, biodiversity, conservation, recreation and education.

The judges continued: Matt is of the view that one cannot justify planting hardwood on a commercial basis alone as one would not live long enough. But that has not deterred him as he believes that such planting is for the benefit of future generations and the environment.

Crann board member Orla Farrell was at the presentation function and she reported afterwards for Crann Magazine, as follows:

There was a presentation on the impressive achievements of winners in the myriad categories. Winners included Tintern Forest Properties (40,000 visitors p.a.), Vartry Reservoir, Cratloe Woods



Matt Fogarty with his family at the RDS presentation ceremony. Below: Matt Fogarty with RDS president Bernie Brennan and Andrew Doyle, Minister of State for Food, Forestry and Horticulture



managed by Coillte, Matt Fogarty in Multipurpose Forestry. Patrick J O'Reilly of Belturbet and his wife Ann received an RDS-Forest Service Production Forestry Award; they are one of the first to receive FSC certification and they use no herbicides, and were complimented for their significant economic contribution locally and for their facilitating participation in research into best practice. Thomas Pollard of Thurles (RDS-Forest Service Teagasc Farm Forestry Award) reduced his workload by planting 48 of his 79 ha in continuous cover oak and alder blocks, switching from fattening cattle to a different herd. Ailbhe Gerard, Brookfield Farm, Co

Tipperary (RDS Sustainable Farming Award) was recognised for her hiveshare project. Others included Leahy's Open Farm, Middleton (Sustainable Living Award) and Self Help Africa which has merged with Gorta (Ceres Sustainability Champion Award).

The economic, environmental and societal sustainability of rural Ireland was at the heart of the RDS Spring Awards, which took place in April. RDS Chief Executive Michael Duffy said the 17 awards given out by the RDS highlighted some of the best examples of sustainable farmers and foresters in the country. These awards recognised and rewarded farmers and woodland owners who are employing the principles of climate-smart agriculture on their properties, including sound commercial management, environmental protection and the encouragement of biodiversity, he said. "This year we took further steps to incorporate climate-smart agriculture into the RDS Spring Awards to better reflect the changes that agriculture needs to make to ensure sustainable living and sustainable farming in rural Ireland."

Pictures: **Gary Belcher**

Tree-planting initiative by Crowne Plaza and Panda Greenstar



During National Tree Week, Crann – Trees for Ireland helped the Crowne Plaza Dublin-Northwood Hotel to answer the call to ‘Plant for our Planet’. Garret O’Neill, General Manager of Crowne Plaza Dublin-Northwood, said the group recognised its responsibility for the environmental impact of their business. “We are constantly working on innovative ways to improve and counteract any such impacts,” he said. “With the support of Panda Greenstar, the Crowne Plaza partnered with Crann – Trees for Ireland and easy-treesie to host a range of tree planting, educational and climate action activities which will benefit various communities.”

To launch this partnership, during National Tree Week, there was a ceremonial tree planting of an oak tree in Fingal County Council’s superb Northwood Park, Santry, demesne under the direction of Joe Daly of Fingal’s operations department. This marked the culmination of a collaboration between Fingal County

Council and Crann – Trees for Ireland with easy-treesie, a volunteer-led initiative which runs the UN-sponsored Plant-for-the-Planet programme aiming to plant one trillion trees with children globally. Almost 1,000 children aged 6-18 have planted over 3,300 trees on public parklands and in school grounds within Fingal alone during 2018/19. This tree-planting project is expanding with uptake from five other local authorities around the country.

Students from Gaelscoil Bhaile Munna participated in the Northwood Demesne event and planted 183 saplings as well as the magnificent standard native oak. The trees were supplied by Coillte, the Tree Council of Ireland and Fingal County Council. The planting party was preceded by a talk by Orla Farrell, Crann/easy treesie project leader, to the children on the

importance of tree planting for sustainability. She emphasised how these trees would capture carbon dioxide to address climate change and she ensured that the children understood the importance of nurturing and cherishing our young and mature trees. Bhí an Meitheal Oibre seo trí mheán na Gaeilge. Crann – Trees for Ireland also accepted some welcome sponsorship on the day as part of the Crowne Plaza/Panda Greenstar initiative.

Among the attendees at the launch to support this initiative were Dublin North West TD Noel Rock, Garret O’Neill, General Manager of Crowne Plaza Dublin-Northwood, Tom Coleman, Group Purchasing Manager, and Magda Dabrowska, General Manager of Crowne Plaza Dublin-Blanchardstown.

Panda Greenstar was represented by Fionnuala Carr, Head of Property Services, and Shane Keogh, Corporate Account Manager. Crann – Trees for Ireland was represented by board member Diarmuid McAree, who is also Vice-Chair of a United Nations Committee on Green Jobs in the Forest Sector. Easy-treesie was represented by Orla Farrell, while Fingal County Council was represented by District Supervisor of Parks Colm Rigney.

Corporate activities

More and more corporate enquiries are coming our way in Crann – Trees for Ireland as companies need to fulfil their green agenda objectives. We urge our members to be on the alert in identifying likely companies to participate in this form of corporate activity.

Crann – Trees for Ireland has partnered with corporate clients in various ways. For example, we organised for company staff to visit a local school and plant trees as part of National Tree Week. In another case, company staff worked with after-school/homework clubs who planted trees as a

community group. We also arranged for a company’s staff to work with us as volunteers planting trees on designated county council sites.

Community-spirit initiatives similar to the above have a widespread appeal to companies and also serve to promote Crann aims.

We always welcome enquiries, ideas and suggestions: Tel 01 6275075, info@crann.ie

MARGUERITE ARBUTHNOT-O'BRIEN
Administrator, Crann – Trees for Ireland

Children from
Gaelscoil Bhaile
Munna plant 184
trees, one for every
child in their beautiful
new school which is
situated adjacent to
Santry Demesne





Small nurseries established in Roscrea



Planting John Curry's commemorative tree, a lime, at Sheehane. John was Neighbour of the Year in Roscrea in 2018. Pictured are John Curry, Michael Donovan, Lily Scully and George Cunningham with some young volunteers.

Below: Mr Willie Smyth's 5th year Ag Science students helped out with planting another 50 tree saplings in Coláiste Phobal's tree nursery. Pictured are Mr Smyth, Mr Newman (Green Schools and Roscrea Tidy Towns) and 5th year Ag Science students.

In the spring of this year, the community magazine Roscrea People joined with Roscrea Tidy Towns and the SW Midlands Crann to establish small nurseries in the town. This initiative followed on the planting of over 4,500 native saplings in 2018. Again, the saplings, over 600, mainly birch, rowan, alder, whitethorn, scots pine and oak, were acquired from Trees on the Land.

Nurseries were established at St Cronan's Sheltered Centre, Roscrea Education Centre, Coláiste Phobal and several estates.

The Coláiste Phobal nursery now has 150 saplings of mainly native species of birch, rowan, alder and scots pine. This project is a joint initiative between Coláiste Phobal's Green Schools Committee, Roscrea People and Roscrea Tidy Towns. The saplings mature for two years before final planting. This initiative will form part of the school's

green flag application on the theme of Biodiversity.

Ten more apple trees were added to the fledgling community orchard at Sheehane together with 100 hedging whitethorn. There also, the first dedicatory tree from the 2018 People of the Year Awards was planted in honour of Roscrea's Neighbour of the Year, John Curry, and a suitable plaque will be added in due course. To celebrate their 50 years of service to the community, the Lions Club of Roscrea sponsored 50 standard beech which were planted along the Templemore Road on the approach to the town, augmenting the 100 or so planted last year.

The Tidy Towns and all involved are hoping that the major problem of watering during extensive periods of dry weather will be mitigated this year as help has been promised by the local authority.



In April, the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown county council Cathaoirleach, Cllr Ossian Smyth, and Minister of State for Higher Education Mary Mitchell O'Connor planted a variety of new trees in Stonebridge Park, Shankill, to promote National Tree Week and highlight the contribution of the Shankill Tidy Towns Group, together with Crann – Trees for Ireland, in furthering their Trees For All initiative.

Pupils from St Anne's National School, Scoil Mhuire and Rathmichael National School attended, as well as representatives of Shankill GAA, the local churches, and elected representatives.

Shankill Tidy Towns and Crann in co-operation with DLR and the local community have planted more than 15,500 trees in the environs of the village, more than one tree for every resident. This achievement is helping to enhance local biodiversity, offset carbon emissions and contribute positively to the abatement of greenhouse gases. This year they have planted over 1,000 trees, kindly donated by Coillte, with the aid of the local community and schools, and they encouraged everyone to get involved by planting the right tree in the right place.

During National Tree Week, DLR also got involved with local schools to carry out tree planting events in school grounds and local public parks and open spaces.



Crann's Assist Programme



Variety of trees planted in Shankill



Minister of State for Higher Education Mary Mitchell O'Connor at the Shankill event. The gentleman holding the umbrella is Crann's Diarmuid McAree. (Picture: Peter Cavanagh)

Left: Dancing in the Park! The ground at Stonebridge Park, Shankill, was mechanically prepared for planting and then participants were asked to help plant the young tubed seedlings. Great fun! (Picture: Peter Cavanagh)

Crann 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.

Trees noted by adjudicators in Listowel win

By PADDY SMITH

Congratulations to Listowel on its big win in last year's Tidy Towns competition. The Co Kerry town increased its score by a massive 10 marks between 2017 and 2018 to take the title in the 60th anniversary of the competition. It scored 339 out of a maximum of 450.

The town was best of a record number of 883 entries from towns and villages throughout the country in the SuperValu-sponsored event. It competed in Category D, for towns with a population of 2,500-5,000.

At the presentation ceremony in The Helix in Dublin, Minister for Rural and Community Development Michael Ring noted that Listowel was one of a small number of centres who had consistently entered the competition since its launch in 1958.

Martin Kelleher, managing director of SuperValu, said there was no other competition like it in the rest of Europe, adding that 12 committees had participated for the first time last year.

An on-line search of the adjudicators' reports on Listowel reveals that trees caught their eye. Some samples of comments:

400 trees in a year is a great achievement. Keep up the ongoing work on your pollinator-friendly areas. We cannot underestimate their importance.

Recent tree-planting was noted at the Presentation School.

Do move the tree from in front of the Tidy Towns sign as your plan suggests.

There has been much new tree-planting since last we visited here

The adjudicator could have spent all evening watching the swallows and sand martins feeding over and drinking from the river. Birdsong was fantastic down here and your work with tree-planting and roses along the berm here indicates how much you love the Feale too.

Kenny Heights was just gorgeous. A range of house designs and styles here are complemented by good quality tree-planting.

The use of stone as a mulch for dry weather was noted with approval although there is no need for geraniums to be planted at tree bases.

RICHES FROM POOP: THE TREE-CLIMBING GOATS OF MOROCCO

By GEORGE CUNNINGHAM

Twenty-five years have passed since Carmel and I visited Morocco. We holidayed in Agadir and made several excursions inland. One in particular to the Souss valley remains in the mind's eye, for it was here that we first encountered the remarkable sight of the tree-climbing goats clamouring all over the thorny gnarled trunk and branches of the argan tree (*Argania spinosa*). Strange sights indeed!

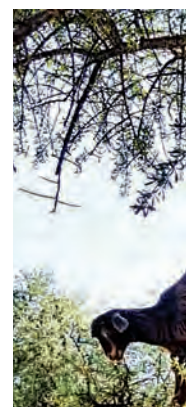
The goats were searching for the fruit of the argan tree which is indigenous to this area of Morocco. They love the thick fleshy pulp that covers the inside nut which looks like a dried olive. They can't digest the hard nut and just pass it. The excreted nut is gathered from the goats' droppings and cracked open. The kernels are then mashed or hand-pressed to produce argan oil, a much-valued and expensive commodity. The oil is an all-natural alternative to chemical products and is particularly beneficial for the skin and hair. It now sells at up to \$300 a litre. Its production, following traditional methods, is time-consuming but important for the Moroccan economy. One olive tree can give up to one litre of olive oil but it takes 30 argan trees to produce one litre of argan oil. More efficient methods of



production are creeping in which pose serious problems for rural communities depending on the argan income. And a company in Israel – the argan is also indigenous to the Arabah and Negev regions there – has now created a

special diseased-free strain of the argan, producing up to ten times more nuts, but without the goats.

However, success brings problems. Tourism entrepreneurship among the Moroccan





Clockwise from above:
Goats are sometimes tied to the tree branches to entice tourists to stop

Carmel Cunningham in the company of new friends 25 years ago

Argan oil production, following traditional methods, is time-consuming but important for the Moroccan economy

Thick fleshy pulp covers the argan nut

The use of more goats leads to damage of the trees



locals has seen honey-spots for tourists and major roads embellished with the sight of these tree-climbers, but they are tied on to give better photo opportunities! Also, as the argan oil is increasingly sought for the export

market, more goats are used but the increasing numbers damage the trees. Argan forests have shrunk and continue to do so despite being a UNESCO biosphere reserve.

The name argan is from the Berber

language, Shilha, the spoken language of the area where the tree is endemic. In these areas, too, it takes the place of the olive tree for oil and fuel.

Have we any argan trees in Ireland?

The lonely elm tree
Opposite page: Elm
seed: could the tree
be resistant and are
its seed viable?
Photos: Patrick
Moran



THE AWESOME ELM *Ulmus procera*



EMMA REEVES isn't old enough to have ever seen a stand of mature elm

As a truly wild tree, elm is now very rare, although it is known to have been one of the commonest trees of fertile soils.' Alan Craig (*The Irish Wildlife Book*, 1979). What an absolute shame that I was born in 1982 so I have never seen a stand of mature elm. I have seen a stand of deadwood in the ringfort at my home place in Co Tipperary. I have also seen some stands of immature elm, say 12 years old, maybe 30" tall near Ardee in Co Louth.

A mature tree in all its glory will grow up to 30m in height with a canopy of 20m. So why don't you see these beauties anymore? The reason for this, as most people over 30 could tell you, is Dutch Elm Disease which spread through our population of elm in the 'Sixties and 'Seventies.

Dutch elm disease is a fungal disease (*Ascomycota*) spread by the elm bark beetle. As the beetle bores under the bark of the tree to lay its eggs it spreads the spores. Unfortunately the tree responds by essentially closing off its water

delivery system (*Xylem*), thereby killing itself through lack of water.

As an ecologist my work takes me all over the country and it's often very exciting finding rare creatures and plants and meeting the people whose land they are on. On a recent trip I went to Killua Castle, Clonmellon, Co Westmeath. The castle is currently under restoration and is owned by Allen Sanginés Krause and his wife Lorena. The site is very picturesque with rolling grasslands and stunning lakes.

Allen walked us around his estate showing us log piles, areas he has recently planted up with trees, and semi-natural grassland. But he really saved the best for last, an elm which is at least 200 years old (very likely an underestimation) and stands at the back of the castle. Using a drone we figure it's at least 25m high.

I was stunned in the best of ways. According to Allen, Thomas Pakenham, the great tree man, noted it was one of the oldest elms he has ever seen in Ireland. Although it was an absolute delight to meet Allen's tree, it was a little sad to see it there all on its own with no

other elm to keep it company. Perhaps it is resistant. Or was too isolated to be infected, poor lonely elm?

Driving around the country I find it does seem that, at least as an immature tree, there is a comeback in elm in the hedgerows. Our abundance of deer, to which elm is very palatable, probably keeps it short too. The beetle favours to lay its eggs in mature tall trees, hence immature specimens are often seen, but once they reach a certain girth they succumb to the disease.

Let's hope that Ash Dieback doesn't create the same havoc at landscape level as Dutch Elm Disease has. Indeed there are plenty of other potential invasive pathogens which could. I'm sure our government agencies will act accordingly.

Despite these negativities, I do get a sense that things are improving. People are becoming more aware of their surroundings and taking pride in what wildlife they have.

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

Reconnecting to nature for health and wellbeing

By SHIRLEY GLEESON

Throughout my 20 years in social work, a current theme would arise again and again: the power of the natural world, especially trees, to support and heal the human spirit in times of suffering and distress. Nature has a way of bringing beauty to the darkest of places, giving people hope in times of despair. Because of these experiences, I now work full-time as a Nature & Wellbeing Consultant. I understand the true value of trees and forests to society. By working to deepen people's connection to nature, I hope that they will go on to protect and safeguard nature for future generations.

I have just returned from Athens from the first World Conference on Forests for Public Health. This meeting brought together scientists, researchers and practitioners from all over the world to discuss the work being done on the benefits of forests for human health. There I presented my research, which aimed to evaluate forest therapy as an intervention for stress.

I designed a 6-week programme, two hours a week, in three different forests in Wicklow and Dublin. The outcomes were very positive with all participants improving their levels of stress, rumination (which causes anxiety) and enhancing their wellbeing. The participants spoke about the "forest as healer" and how they could "just be" in the forest, without having to do anything or be anyone, just themselves. The forest did not judge them or expect anything of them, unlike every-day life. One participant wrote:

"The feel of the wind and the raindrops feel soothing and take attention from my thoughts

about the pain of other things".

Another participant shared how much support she received:

"I definitely feel the connection to nature very healing, because it's time out for myself, it slows me down, body and mind. I feel part of the forest, even though I don't live in it and that's like being loved."

Forest Bathing and Ecotourism

Forest Bathing has long played a part in health care in both Japan and Korea as a preventive health care intervention and is now becoming one of the most effective antidotes to our modern, technology-driven lifestyles. It is a wellness movement spreading worldwide, which gets people to focus on their five senses in nature, slow down and immerse themselves in the forest atmosphere.

In May I spent two days with Yvonne Gordan, an award-winning journalist who is doing a feature on Forest Bathing for the Aer Lingus inflight magazine Cara. I brought her to a number of forests and nature reserves

in Co Wicklow. We made tea from foraged plants, walked barefoot in the dewy grass and lay under beautiful copper-beech trees. Diarmuid McAree, Director of Crann, joined us for an afternoon session on forest ecology and tree identification. The article will be on all the international flights in July.

Forest Therapy as an ecosystem service

Forest Therapy is considered an emerging ecosystem service and both the United Nations and Forest Europe are currently looking at ways of integrating this ecosystem service into sustainable forest management plans. Forest Therapy is the clinical application of Forest Bathing and can be used in the treatment and rehabilitation of mental and physical health. Last year I surveyed 116 Forest Therapy Guides from 28 countries to gain an understanding of what was happening internationally. Guides all over the world were working with people with dementia, caregiver stress, addiction, mental health,



On the recent EFTI training course in Sweden. Picture: Lars Verket

Members of the European Forest Therapy Institute, from left, Petra Ellora Cau, Shinrin-Yoku Sweden; Shirley Gleeson, author of this article; and Alex Gesse from Instituto de Bonosde Bosque, Spain. Pictures: Lars Verket

Below: The European Forest Therapy Institute has just completed its first training session, in Sweden



cancer support and war veterans. The challenges they faced included access to safe, quality trails for urban populations, severe weather, limited government funding and lack of awareness of the benefits of forest therapy among health professionals and the general public.

Last September, I travelled to the United Nations in Geneva with Diarmuid McAree (Forestry Advisor to Ecowellness Consulting Ltd) to speak at the UNECE/FAO/ILO Green Forest Jobs workshop on the potential of Forest Therapy for Green Jobs development. It is hoped that Ireland will host a United Nations conference on Green Jobs in the Forestry Sector, organised by Crann, in the near future.

This year, my company Ecowellness Consulting Ltd, teamed up with a number of other European companies to form the European Forest Therapy Institute (EFTI). EFTI's aim is to train world class Forest Bathing and Forest Therapy Guides in Europe. We have just completed our first training in Sweden and have a number of trainings planned in Europe for 2019 (including an Irish training in Glendalough in August). We trained people from all backgrounds, including psychiatrists, psychologists, ecologists and



artists. Interestingly, 90% of the participants were female.

In April, I met with the Irish Doctors for the Environment to create awareness of the Green Prescription, which values forest therapy. Doctors in various parts of the world are prescribing nature-based activities to promote better health.

A Vision for the Future

We need a dedicated training centre for Forest Bathing and Forest Therapy in Ireland. We also need a network of trails and therapeutic forests,

with guides trained all over Ireland, working with local communities to improve their health and wellbeing. I envision Ireland as a world leader in this field, with Irish doctors writing green prescriptions (benefiting both forests and communities) and Irish universities conducting cutting-edge research to develop its evidence base.

Last year, I heard President Michael D Higgins, who is patron of Crann, speak at the John O'Donoghue International Symposium on the future of humanity in relation to climate change. He highlighted the importance of reconnecting ecology, economy, society and culture. I believe Forest Bathing and Forest Therapy offer a potential path to this integration.

Shirley Gleeson is Director of Ecowellness Consulting Ltd & co-founder of European Forest Therapy Institute. More details: www.ecowellnessconsulting.com

Diversity in the face of climate change



As a beekeeper, Mark Wilkinson has been really enjoying the spectacle of hawthorn in flower. The common hawthorn blossom (*Crataegus monogyna*). Picture: Wikipedia Grandpa

While watching the Chelsea Flower Show on TV, I was struck by an interview of Sarah Eberle by Monty Don. They were standing in the Resilience garden which she designed. Her message basically is that we need to diversify in the face of climate change. She makes the point that we don't have that many native trees and that in future we will be forced to diversify. I agree.

I hear so many people in print media and on radio and TV talking about planting 'Native Trees' to sequester CO₂ and help pollinators, neither of which they do particularly well compared to many other tree species.

Tree health

There is no doubt that our trees are under threat from pests, diseases and changes in our climate. We have already lost our elms; ash appear to be heading in the same direction caused by *chalara fraxinea*, both caused by fungi, the former aided and abetted by the elm bark beetle.

One of my favourite trees, the larch, is being affected by a fungus-like pathogen called

Phytophthora Ramorum infecting trees mainly in the south-west, mostly affecting Japanese larch. The Forest Service in its wisdom has stopped grant aiding all larch planting including European larch.

I think this is somewhat short-sighted as European larch is resistant to the disease. Larch produces a very important timber to both boatbuilding and construction; it will be sorely missed.

There is no doubt that monoculture puts the world of forestry at risk. In the 1950s and 1960s my father was a bit of a pioneer in this regard and always planted a mixture of broadleaves and conifers when doing a new plantation.

I have a problem with some people objecting to forestry and making it a political issue, while failing to realise that the industry is a good employer, it substitutes expensive imports, providing raw material for the building industry while helping with our climate change obligations by sequestering CO₂.

Trees for the soul

Most of us get a lot of pleasure from trees, either by just looking at them, standing in a woodland glade or simply being or walking in

a forest (an ever-growing pastime).

As a beekeeper I am really enjoying the spectacle of hawthorn in flower; actually, of course anyone can enjoy these lovely blooms which are a real sign of early summer. Bees love these blooms but can't make use of their nectar if the ambient temperature is below 15C.

Giants Grove

Giant redwoods (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*) last grew in Ireland before the Ice Age and these native trees are now growing in the grounds of Birr Castle (see Pg 5 for an update on this project). People can sponsor a tree to remember their loved ones (www.giantsgrove.ie) as my siblings and I have done to remember my parents Keith and Eleanor. I'm sure that 'the old man' would prefer his name on a tree rather than a headstone!

MARK WILKINSON

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.

RDS-Forest Service

2019 Irish Forestry and Woodland Awards

Celebrating and rewarding excellence in Irish Forestry since 1988

€9,000 Prize Fund

Whether your woodland is for commercial, recreational or a number of different purposes, there is an award category for you. Everyone is encouraged to enter with prizes for winners and runners up in every category.

For more information on the 2019 Awards, contact:

RDS Forestry
e: forestry@rds.ie
t: 01 240 7215

www.rds.ie/forestry
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Justin Good, Co Cavan
RDS Forestry Award Winner



Our Business is Sustainability

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We continued to invest strongly in world-class technology to transform the Group's operational performance:

- Our core forestry business is becoming a leader in global forestry technology through its **Connected Forest** technology strategy
- We signed a **€1 million forestry technology contract** with Treemetrics to roll-out ground-breaking communications technology that will map the future of global forestry harvest control
- Our MEDITE SMARTPLY division entered a €68 million deal with Accsys Technologies and BP to transform wood technology by developing the **world's first Tricoya wood chip manufacturing plant**
- Opened our **new €59 million MEDITE SMARTPLY manufacturing facility** giving us a strong technological platform to become the number one provider of innovative, value-added wood panels
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COILLTE

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FOREST OWNERS!

An enhanced Woodland Improvement Scheme is now available



The Woodland Improvement Scheme now provides support for a first and second thinning intervention grant. Both grant-aided and non grant-aided broadleaf forests and broadleaf mixtures are now eligible for the scheme. A fixed grant of up to €750 per hectare is available for a first intervention and up to €500 per hectare for a second intervention.

The scheme is aimed at:

- Improving the quality of hardwoods being produced thereby increasing the quality and value of the broadleaf forest
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 - Producing higher quality hardwood timber
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 - Encouraging healthy tree growth
-- Removing nurse species from conifer/broadleaf mixtures
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 - Landscape and biodiversity enhancement



An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine

For up-to-date and detailed information on forestry grant schemes, visit
<https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/forests-service/grants-and-premium-schemes/2015-2019/>

For contact details of your local Teagasc Forestry Advisor, visit
www.teagasc.ie/crops/forestry/