

**BLOODY CRANESBILL**  
*Geranium sanguineum*  
*Crohb dearg*

Bloody cranesbill isn't really a woodland plant but it occurs in grassland on woodland edges in Portumna Forest Park close the shores of Lough Derg. The flowers are a stunning crimson colour and they appear from July to August.



**COMMON DOG-VIOLET**  
*Viola riviniana*  
*Fanaigse*

Common dog-violet is one of several native violets that are found in Ireland. Common dog-violet flowers in spring and again in autumn.



**HERB ROBERT**  
*Geranium robertianum*  
*Ruithéal ri*

Herb Robert flowers from April until September. A very common plant, it grows in a wide variety of situations including woodland.



**PRIMROSE**  
*Primula vulgaris*  
*Sabhaircín*

Primroses are a common garden plant but there is also a native primrose that occurs in woodlands and hedgerows. It flowers from March until June.



**BLUEBELL**  
*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*  
*Coinle corra*

Bluebells are beautiful woodland flowers that thrive on limy and rich soils. Portumna Forest Park has a grove of beech trees known as the Ladies Tea Garden that has a spectacular display of bluebells every year in late spring and early summer.



**WILD GARLIC/RAMSONS**  
*Allium ursinum*  
*Creamh*

Wild garlic is easily identified by the strong smell of garlic on damp soils. Flowers from April to June.



**LESSER CELANDINE**  
*Ficaria verna*  
*Grán ardaín*

Lesser celandine is another woodland specialist that flowers early in the season (March-May). It is a member of the buttercup family but the heart-shaped leaves distinguish it from the common meadow and creeping buttercups found in grassland.



**WOOD ANEMONE**  
*Anemone nemorosa*  
*Lus na Gaoithe*

Wood anemone is a woodland specialist that flowers in spring before the leaves are on the trees (March-April). The flowers are white but often have a pink-purplish flush.



**SPINDLE**  
*Euonymus europaeus*  
*Fearas*

The wood of the spindle tree is extremely hard and was used in the manufacturing of spindles for wool-spinning. The leaves of spindle turn a beautiful orange-pink in the autumn. The berries are a spectacular pink with a bright orange interior.



**HAZEL**  
*Corylus avellana - Coll*

Hazel is a small tree or shrub commonly found in hedgerows and woodland, or on limestone pavement. Hazel has many traditional uses and is associated with a rich folklore. For our ancestors, hazel was a symbol of fertility, wisdom and knowledge. Hazel has been used for centuries for water divining.



## Acknowledgments

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For more information  
[www.visitportumna.com](http://www.visitportumna.com)  
[www.angairdin.com](http://www.angairdin.com)

*Remember to leave only footprints,  
take only photographs and memories!*

*'Take this leaflet on your walk in the woods and see can you find some of these trees and flowers'.*



Featured artwork Niamh Ni Mhealóid

**Portumna Forest Park** is a popular and beautiful natural amenity on the northern shore of Lough Derg, and a haven for wildlife. The woodland in the park contains a mix of native Oak woodland, conifer plantation, stands of Beech, wet Willow woodland and unique Juniper formations in wetland near the lake shore.

The diversity of plant life in Portumna Forest Park provides a wealth of food for wildlife (e.g. leaves, flowers, nuts, seeds and berries). The park is home to a thriving population of red squirrel. The more elusive pine marten and otters (along the lake shore) are also in the park and fallow deer can often be seen darting about in the shadows. Stoat, hedgehogs, badgers and bats are also likely to be present. There is also a rich and diverse birdlife in the park including the iconic white-tailed sea eagle.

This leaflet provides a guide to some of the native plants (trees and flowers) that can be seen in Portumna Forest Park as you stroll through the woods. Most of our native trees are deciduous (they lose their leaves in the winter e.g. Oak and Ash) but some are coniferous (they have needle-like leaves e.g. Scots pine and Yew). Many woodland flowers appear on the woodland floor in early spring before the leaves are out on the trees (e.g. Lesser celandine and Wood anemone) but others don't mind the deep shade cast by the trees and flower later in the summer (e.g. Herb Robert).

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# Portumna Forest Park

*Can you find?*



Guide to Woodland Flora

Nature in Portumna Series No.1





Yew with Berries



Yew in Flower



Birch Leaves



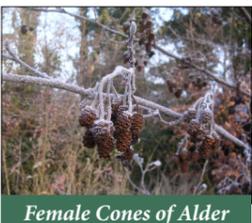
Autumn Colours of Birch



Scots Pine



Alder Leaves



Female Cones of Alder



Guelder Rose in Flower



Guelder Rose Autumn Colour and Berries

**YEW**  
*Taxus baccata* - Iúr

Yew is one of the few native conifers in Ireland. It used to be more common but now only occurs rarely in woods, such as Portumna Forest Park, and is generally associated with limey soils or limestone pavement. A long-lived tree, yew can live for over 2000 years! Yew was traditionally associated with immortality and is often planted in churchyards. It has dark, green foliage and casts a dense shade. Unusually for a conifer, Yew produces bright red berries. The leaves and berries of Yew are poisonous to people and livestock but not birds.

**DOWNY BIRCH**  
*Betula pubescens*  
Beith Chlúmhach

There are two types of birch native to Ireland, downy and silver birch. Downy birch is the most common and it grows in Portumna Forest Park. It is a small tree with fine branches. Birch catkins emerge early in the year providing one of the first signs of spring. Small, seed-eating birds such as redpoll love the seed of birch trees. A pioneer species, birch improves soil fertility.

**SCOTS PINE**  
*Pinus sylvestris*  
Peine Albánach

There is some debate about whether Scots pine is native to Ireland but in any event it is a beautiful conifer that grows in Portumna Forest Park. Red squirrel are particularly fond of pine seeds. Scots pine is distinguished by the orange hue to the bark.

**ALDER**  
*Alnus glutinosa*  
Fearnóg

Alder commonly grows on damp ground close to rivers and lakes but it can grow on a wide range of soils. Alder and willow form a type of 'wet woodland' that fringes much of the shore of Lough Derg and helps to maintain water quality. Alder is an unusual broad-leaved tree because the female flowers produce cones! Alder timber that can be used for furniture making, fire-wood and to make under-water structures as it is resistant to decay e.g. sluice gates.

**GUELDER ROSE**  
*Viburnum opulus*  
Caor Chon

Guelder rose isn't a rose but a native shrub that produces beautiful displays of creamy white flowers and luminous red berries. It can be found in damp woods on limey soils, and in Portumna Forest Park near the shore of Lough Derg.



Juniper in Portumna Forest Park



Juniper Berries



Elm Leaf in Autumn Colour



Wych Elm in Fruit



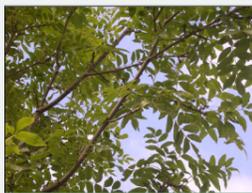
Oak Seedling



Hawthorn in Flower



Hawthorn Berries or Haws



Ash Leaves



Crab Apple in Flower

**JUNIPER**  
*Juniperus communis*  
Aiteal

Juniper is another native conifer. It usually grows close to the ground but in Portumna Forest Park there are unusual stands of upright juniper. Juniper berries have long been used to flavour gin.

**WYCH ELM**  
*Ulmus glabra*  
Leamhán sléibhe

Wych elm is native to Ireland. Much of the elm in Ireland are varieties smooth or wych elm that were planted. The Irish wych elm appears to be more resistant to Dutch Elm Disease. Elm wood is highly valued for crafts and furniture-making.

**OAK, PEDUNCULATE**  
*Quercus robur*  
Dair ghallda

There are two types of native oak tree in Ireland, the sessile oak and the pedunculate oak, which is more common in Portumna Forest Park. The pedunculate oak favours heavy lowland soils and can withstand periods of flooding and wet soil in winter. Oak trees are of huge value for wildlife.

**HAWTHORN**  
*Crataegus monogyna*  
Sceach Gheal

Hawthorn is the most common hedgerow shrub in Ireland. It also grows on the edge of woodland and in damp woodland. The flowers of hawthorn appear after the leaves (in contrast to blackthorn). Hawthorn is steeped in legend and folklore. 'Fairy trees' are often hawthorn trees. Hawthorn has huge value for wildlife, particularly pollinators and birds.

**ASH**  
*Fraxinus excelsior*-Fuinseoig

Ash is the commonest tree in Irish hedgerows and is a common woodland tree, particularly on limey soils. It also tolerates damp soils in winter. The wood of ash is prized for making hurleys. Ash is traditionally associated with healing and it is frequently found near holy wells.

**CRAB APPLE**  
*Malus sylvestris*  
Crann Fia-úll

Crab apple is a native small tree with that can produce wonderful displays of flowers and abundant fruit. It can be found in association with old farmsteads, in hedgerows and in damp or old woodland. Crab apple has long been used for making jams, jellies and wine.

**BLACKTHORN**  
*Prunus spinosa*  
Draighean

A spiny shrub, blackthorn is commonly found in hedgerows and scrub. It also occurs in woodland edges. The flowers emerge before the leaves producing a spray of white in hedgerows when all else is bare. Blackthorn has traditionally been used for flavouring gin or poteen. In the past, a blackthorn stick was thought to provide protection against harm and was thought to be a good thing to carry at night.

**HOLLY**  
*Ilex aquifolium*  
Cuileann

Holly is one of the few broad-leaved evergreen trees or shrubs native to Ireland. It commonly grows in old woodland under the canopy of taller trees. Holly has been traditionally used for medicinal purposes, timber carving and for Christmas decoration. Holly is the food plant of the holly blue butterfly. The berries are highly prized by birds.

**ROWAN**  
*Sorbus aucuparia*  
Caorthann

An attractive small tree, rowan or mountain ash produces beautiful sprays of creamy white flowers and bright red berries. Birds such as blackbirds and mistle thrush love rowan berries. Rowan was traditionally used for good luck, good health and to ward off evil spirits!

**IVY**  
*Hedera hibernica*  
Eidhneán

Ivy is a native broadleaved, evergreen shrub that is an integral part of native woodlands. Ivy is of huge value to wildlife as it provides food and shelter for birds and small mammals. It also provides a late source of nectar and pollen for pollinators, especially bees. Traditionally ivy was used in herbal medicine to relieve the pain of corns. It has long been a symbol of fidelity in Irish folklore. In autumn, Ivy is the food plant of the Holly Blue butterfly and an overwintering site for the Brimstone which takes shelter under the evergreen leaves.

**WILLOW, GREY**  
*Salix cinerea subsp. oleifolia*  
Saileach Liath

Grey willow is a small tree or shrub that is often found growing on damp ground near lake edges, rivers and streams but it also occurs in hedgerows and woodland. Willow has been traditionally used for basket making.



Blackthorn in Flower



Blackthorn Berries or Sloes



Holly and Berries



Holly in Flower



Rowan Berries



Rowan in Flower



Ivy Leaves and Flowers (with Hawthorn Berries)



Ivy Flower and Bee



Male Catkin of Grey Willow



Grey Willow Leaves