



Parks and Landscape Services Division

Creating a mini-wood or hedgerow

For biodiversity purposes, use native Irish species as much as possible such as:
Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*). Tolerant of cold and exposed sites, including windswept coastal areas. Dislikes waterlogged sites. Best transplanted young. Casts light shade, which permits rich undergrowth. Seeds (keys) eaten by birds and small mammals.

Wild Cherry (*Prunus avium*). Attractive blossom, foliage and fruit. Establishes easily. Blooms attract bees, fruit taken by birds. High quality timber, especially favoured for Furniture. A pyramid shaped tree with attractive bark and leaves which turn red or yellow in autumn. It carries masses of white flowers in April/May, followed later in the year by dark ornamental cherries. It will reach a height of 7metres in 10 years, and eventually 15 metres.

Sessile Oak (*Quercus petraea*). Tolerates shallow rocky soils and can grow on clay. Very windfirm. Outstanding wildlife tree. Grows best when "nursed" between faster growing species. Richest insect tree. Many associated plants. Birds and mammals feed on acorns.

Irish species of shrubs/trees suited to creating a hedgerow or for shelter or edge planting are:

Elder (Boor Tree)

Ash

Holly

Wild Privet (cousin of Irish version but very closely related & suited to Irish wildlife)

Willow

Gorse (furze)

Hazel

Spindle

Wild Plum (damson)

Crab apple

Guelder Rose

Rowan

Wild Cherry

Elm

Wild Rose

Honeysuckle

See http://www.heritagecouncil.ie/publications/conserve_wildlife/wildlife.pdf for '*Conserving and Enhancing wildlife in towns and villages*' which provides full list of native Irish trees and how to grow them.

A mini-wood could be as small as 4m square. However it should have four layers: ground, field, shrub and canopy.

The ground layer contains leaf litter, rotting logs, moss, ivy and fungi. Woodlice, beetles, centipedes etc. will frequent it.

The field layer contains shade-loving flowers such as Cowslips, Bluebells, Wild garlic, Wood anemone and Wood sorrel. These will bloom in early spring before the tree leaves block out most of the light.

The shrub layer contains species from above list e.g. Holly, Hazel, Hawthorn, Crab apple and Honeysuckle. The tree layer will have native trees such as Rowan, Oak, Birch, Ash and Alder.

Insects and other creatures will be attracted to their own specific layers. These in turn will attract birds: Thrushes will be drawn to the canopy, Robins and finches to the shrubs, Blackbirds and Wrens to the ground. One Oak, one Holly, several species of native woodland flowers and a heap of rotting logs would constitute a mini-wood.

The following is a list of some native trees and the number of their dependent insect species:

- Birch-229
- Ash-41
- Alder-90
- Rowan-28
- Willow-266
- Elm-82
- Hazel-73
- Holly-7

Contact the DCC Biodiversity Officer if you are having difficulty sourcing Irish stock.

biodiversity@dublincity.ie

See www.dublincity.ie and www.dublin.ie for Biodiversity Tips.