

Trees in Ireland

During the Ice Age, Ireland was covered in snow and ice. When the weather became warmer and the ice began to thaw, trees began to grow. The seeds for these trees were brought by animals, birds and the wind across land-bridges from Europe and Britain. As the snow and ice continued to melt, the sea levels rose cutting Ireland off from Europe and Britain. The species of trees that reached Ireland before it became separate are known today as 'native' trees. Native trees were not introduced by human beings.

Ireland has many species of native trees. The most commonly-found native species include oak, ash, birch, and hazel trees.

In the following years, people travelling to Ireland and birds migrating from other countries brought lots of other species of trees to Ireland. These trees are known as 'non-native' trees. They include sycamore, beech, and the horse chestnut tree. Some non-native species of tree have been growing in Ireland for over a thousand years! In total, there are over 7500 species of trees growing in Ireland.



Irish Culture and Trees

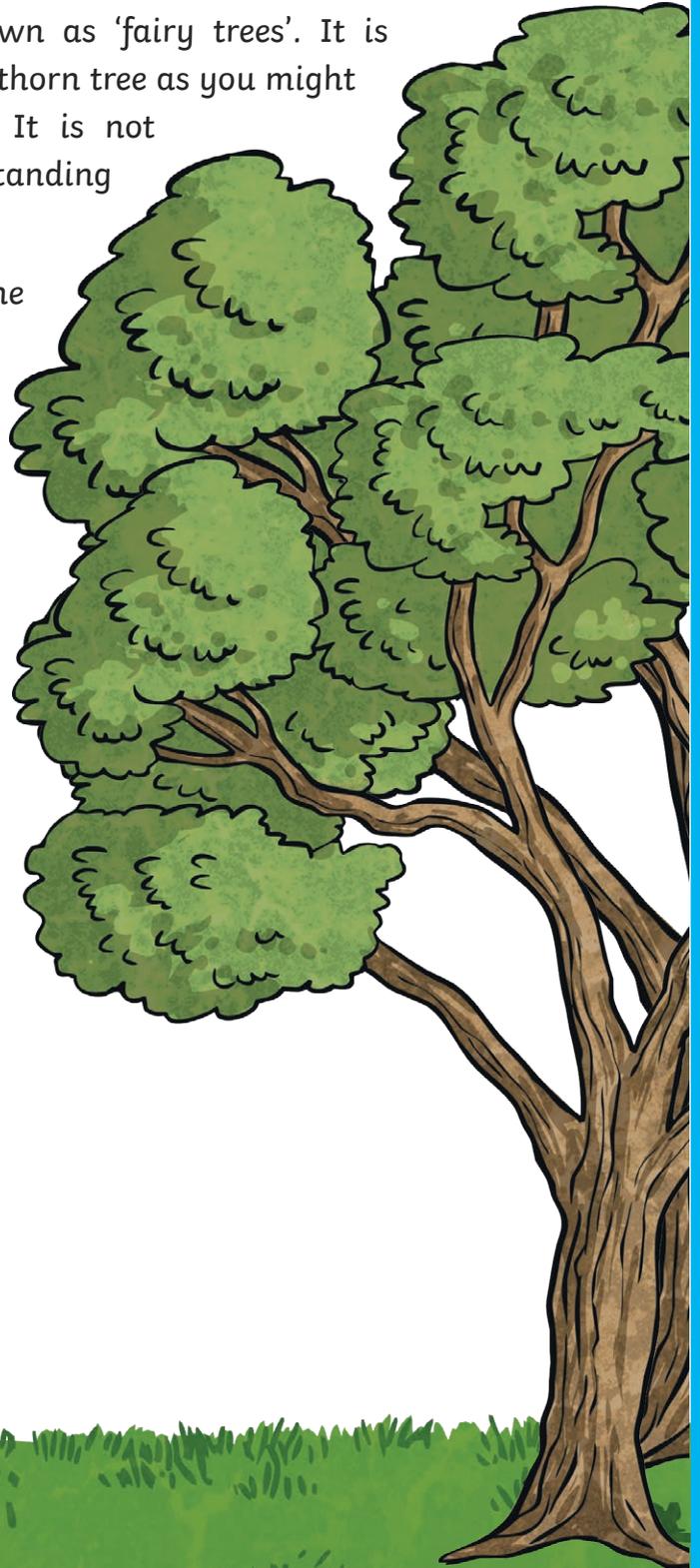
Trees were very important in early Irish culture. In fact, 13 000 of Ireland's townlands are named after trees. For example, Kildare (Cill Dara) comes from the Irish word for oak: dair.

Ireland's ancient language, Ogham, was greatly influenced by trees. Many of the letters of Ogham were named after trees: birch, alder, willow, oak, hazel, pine, ash and yew.

Today, there are still trees in Ireland that are thought to be special. In Co. Laois, people visit St. Fintan's 'money tree' and put coins into the trunk of the tree, in the hope of attracting money.

Hawthorn trees are traditionally known as 'fairy trees'. It is considered bad luck to cut down a hawthorn tree as you might disturb the fairies that dwell there! It is not uncommon to see a hawthorn tree standing alone in the middle of a field.

Ireland's tallest tree is a Douglas pine tree in Powerscourt Estate. It stands at 61.5 metres tall.



Questions

1. What is a native tree?

2. Give three examples of native Irish trees.

Three examples of native Irish trees are _____

3. What is a non-native tree?

A non-native tree is _____

4. Give three examples of non-native Irish trees.

Three examples of non-native trees are _____

5. How many species of tree are there growing in Ireland today?

There are _____ species of trees growing in Ireland today.

6. What Irish county is named after the oak tree?

_____ is named after the oak tree.

7. Can you name three letters of the Ogham alphabet?

8. What species of tree are known as fairy trees?

9. How tall is Ireland's tallest tree?

Ireland's tallest tree is _____ metres tall.

10. Can you name five species of tree?

Answers

1. What is a native tree?
A native tree is a tree that came to Ireland before it was separated from Europe.
2. Give three examples of native Irish trees.
Three examples, including: oak, ash, birch or hazel.
3. What is a non-native tree?
A non-native tree is a tree that came to Ireland after it was separated from Europe.
4. Give three examples of non-native Irish trees.
Three examples of non-native Irish trees are sycamore, beech and horse chestnut.
5. How many species of tree are there growing in Ireland today?
There are over 7500 species of trees growing in Ireland today.
6. What Irish county is named after the oak tree?
Kildare is named after the oak tree.
7. Can you name three letters of the Ogham alphabet?
Three answers, including: birch, alder, willow, oak, hazel, pine, ash or yew.
8. What species of tree are known as fairy trees?
Hawthorn trees are known as fairy trees.
9. How tall is Ireland's tallest tree?
Ireland's tallest tree is 61.5 metres tall.
10. Can you name five species of tree?
Varied answers.

Trees in Ireland

During the Ice Age, Ireland was covered in snow and ice. When the weather became warmer and the ice began to melt, trees began to grow.

The seeds for these trees were brought by animals, birds and the wind, across land-bridges from Europe and Britain. When the snow melted, Ireland was cut off from Europe and Britain. The trees that reached Ireland before it became separate are known today as 'native' trees.

Ireland has many species of native trees. The most commonly-found native species include oak, ash, birch, and hazel trees.

Over time, people travelling to Ireland and birds migrating from other countries brought lots of other species of trees to Ireland. These trees are known as 'non-native' trees. They include sycamore, beech, and the horse chestnut tree.

Some non-native species of tree have been growing in Ireland for over a thousand years! In total there are over 7500 species of trees growing in Ireland.



Irish Culture and Trees

Trees were an important part of early civilization in Ireland. In fact, 13 000 of Ireland's 16 000 townlands have a reference to a tree in their name. For example, Kildare (Cill Dara) comes from the Irish word for oak: dair.

Ireland's ancient language, Ogham, was greatly influenced by trees. Many of the letters of Ogham were named after trees: birch, alder, willow, oak, hazel, pine, ash and yew.

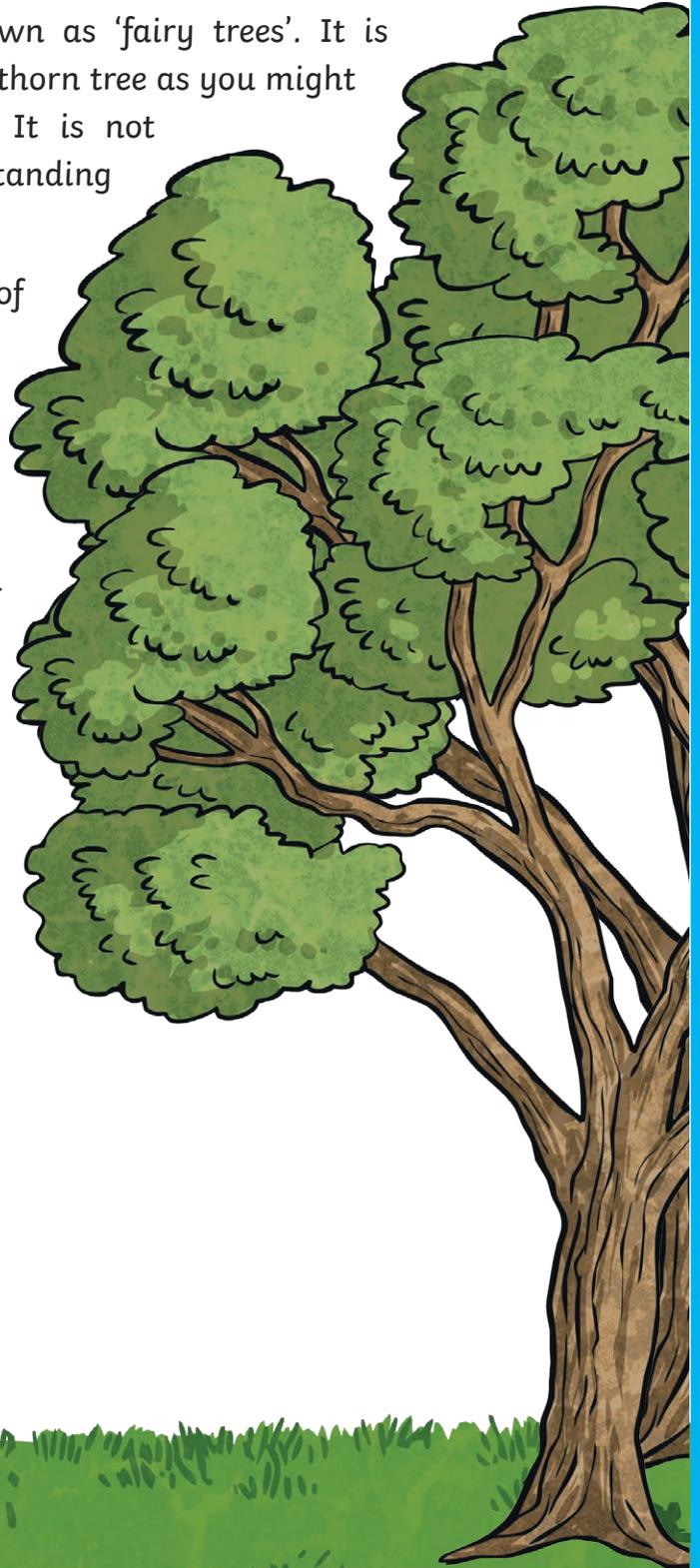
Trees were so important to Irish people that they were protected by the Brehon Laws, which were in place until the 17th century in Ireland. Under Brehon Law, penalties were imposed on people who cut down or damaged certain trees.

Today, there are still trees in Ireland that are thought to be sacred. In Co. Laois, people visit St. Fintan's 'money tree' and insert coins into the trunk of the tree, in the hope of attracting wealth.

Hawthorn trees are traditionally known as 'fairy trees'. It is considered bad luck to cut down a hawthorn tree as you might disturb the fairies that dwell there! It is not uncommon to see a hawthorn tree standing alone in the middle of a field.

In 1999, in Co. Clare, the building of a road between Ennis and Clare was delayed due to a 'fairy tree' standing in its path. Clare County Council was not permitted to cut down the tree, or build the road within a 5-metre radius of the tree. In the end, the road was rerouted around the tree and a protective fence stands between the tree and the road today.

Ireland's tallest tree is a Douglas pine tree in Powerscourt Estate. It stands at 61.5 metres tall.



Questions

1. What is a native tree?

2. What is a non-native tree?

3. What happened to the land-bridges between Europe and Ireland?

4. How did the first native trees reach Ireland?

5. How many species of tree are there growing in Ireland today?

6. What laws were in place in Ireland until the 17th century?

7. What is a fairy tree?

8. Explain what happened to the fairy tree in Co. Clare in 1999.

9. Can you name eight species of tree?

Answers

1. What is a native tree?
A native tree is a tree that was brought to Ireland before it was separated from Europe.
2. What is a non-native tree?
A non-native tree is a tree that was brought to Ireland after it was separated from Europe.
3. What happened to the land-bridges between Europe and Ireland?
They were covered by water after the ice and snow melted.
4. How did the first native trees reach Ireland?
The first native trees reached Ireland by birds, animals and the winds.
5. How many species of tree are there growing in Ireland today?
There are over 7500 species of trees growing in Ireland today.
6. What laws were in place in Ireland until the 17th century?
The Brehon Laws were in place in Ireland until the 17th century.
7. What is a fairy tree?
A fairy tree is a hawthorn tree.
8. Explain what happened to the fairy tree in Co. Clare in 1999.
A road was built around a fairy tree in Co. Clare in 1999, as the County Council were not allowed to cut it down.
9. Can you name eight species of trees?
Varied answers.

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During the Ice Age, Ireland was covered in snow and ice. When the weather became warmer and the ice began to thaw, trees began to grow. The seeds for these trees were brought by animals, birds and the wind, across land-bridges from Europe and Britain. As the snow and ice continued to melt, the sea levels rose, covering these land-bridges and cutting Ireland off from Europe and Britain. The species of trees that reached Ireland before it became separate are now known as 'native' trees. Native trees were not introduced by human beings.

Ireland has many species of native trees. The most commonly-found native species include oak, ash, birch, and hazel trees.

In the following years, people travelling to Ireland and migratory birds brought lots of other species of trees to Ireland. These trees are known as 'non-native' trees. They include sycamore, beech, and the horse chestnut tree. Some non-native species of tree have been growing in Ireland for over a thousand years! In total there are over 7500 species of trees growing in Ireland.



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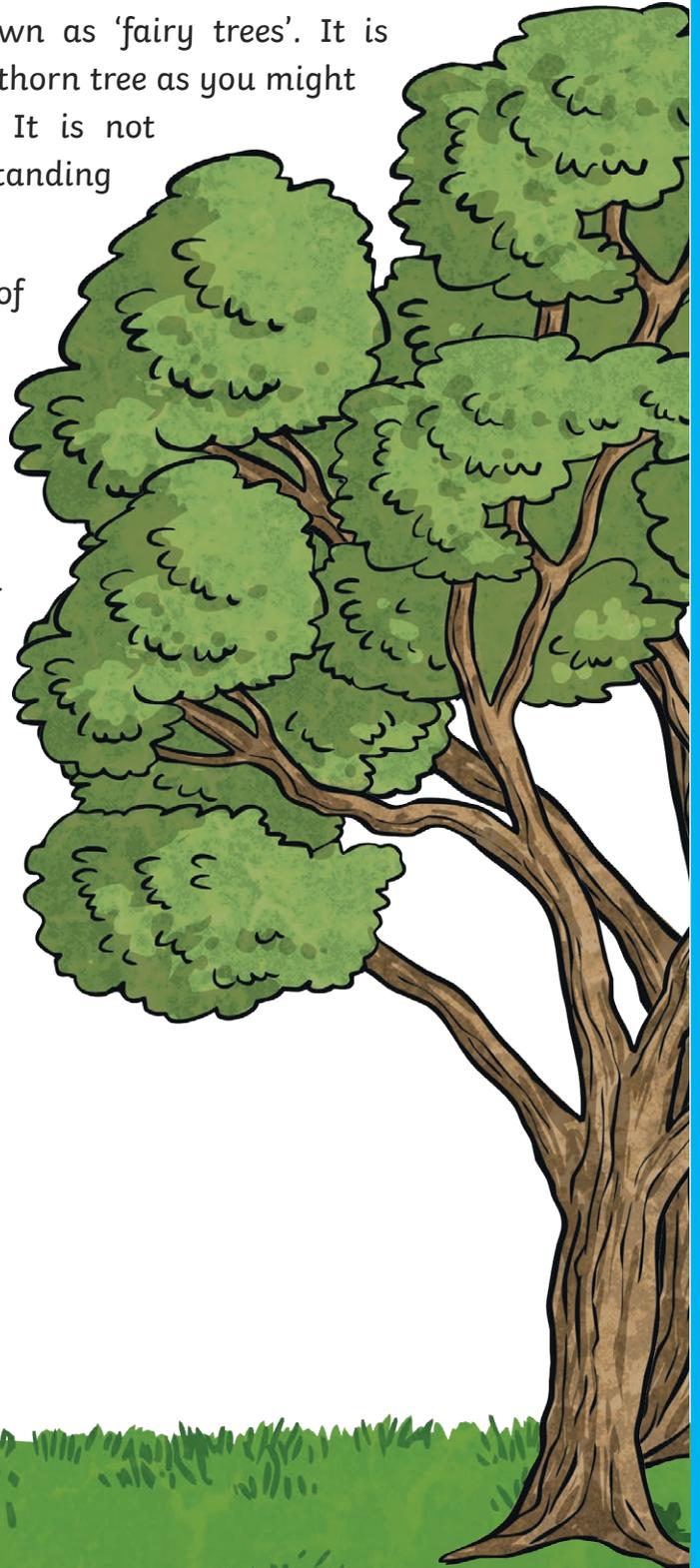
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Questions

1. Explain the difference between native and non-native trees.

2. How did Ireland become separated from mainland Europe and Britain?

3. Name 3 native and 3 non-native species of tree in Ireland.

4. How do you think birds took new species of tree to Ireland?

5. How many species of trees are there growing in Ireland today?

6. Name four letters from the Ogham alphabet.

7. What is a fairy tree?

8. Write down as many species of tree as you can think of.

Answers

1. Explain the difference between native and non-native trees.
Native trees were brought to Ireland before it was separated from Europe and Britain by water. Non-native trees were brought to Ireland after it was separated from Europe and Britain.
2. How did Ireland become separated from mainland Europe and Britain?
After the ice age, the snow and ice melted. This caused the sea levels to rise, covering the land-bridges between Ireland, and Europe and Britain.
3. Name 3 native and 3 non-native species of tree in Ireland.
**Three examples of native Irish trees, from: oak, ash, birch or hazel.
Three examples of non-native Irish trees are sycamore, beech and horse chestnut.**
4. How do you think birds took new species of tree to Ireland?
Varied answers.
5. How many species of trees are there growing in Ireland today?
There are over 7500 species of trees growing in Ireland today.
6. Name four letters from the Ogham alphabet.
Four answers, from: birch, alder, willow, oak, hazel, pine, ash or yew.
7. What is a fairy tree?
A fairy tree is a hawthorn tree.
8. Write down as many species of tree as you can think of.
Varied answers.