

Seachtain Náisiúnta na gCrann

WALLACE MARKS BEGINNING OF TREE WEEK

Speaking at a tree planting function in Lough Bracken Wood, Co. Meath, today to mark National Tree Week, **Ms. Mary Wallace T.D.**, Minister of State at the Department of Agriculture and Food with responsibility for forestry, congratulated the Tree Council of Ireland on the organisation of so many different activities for National Tree Week and commented *“with over 300 events organised around the country, ranging from forest walks, seminars, workshops, exhibitions and tree planting ceremonies, everyone will have the opportunity to participate in an event in their local area”*.

Minister of State Wallace added that it was important that people avail of such opportunities to become aware of, and appreciate, the importance of forestry and the many benefits derived from forestry. She pointed to the example of Lough Bracken Wood, a popular place for local recreational use. It has been developed with the cooperation of Meath County Council the Fisheries Board, Coillte and the local community. Located adjacent to a spring lake (Lough Bracken) that serves the local community, the woodland demonstrates the ability of forestry and woodland to provide recreational and environmental benefits side by side.

On the subject of forestry and the environment, Minister of State Wallace pointed to recent developments in that area with the introduction of the innovative Forest Environment Protection Scheme (FEPS). This scheme gives farmers who are in the popular REPS scheme (Rural Environment Protection Scheme) an opportunity to further increase the environmental quality of their holding by planting some forestry. They can then avail of up to €200 per hectare on top of the existing relevant forestry payments bringing the total amount available up to a maximum of €774 per hectare, tax-free.

The Minister also pointed out that as part of Tree Week she has launched an initiative to distribute educational posters to over 3000 primary schools which highlight the different varieties of native trees to be found throughout Ireland. The Minister of State will be attending a number of events over National Tree Week including the National Renewable Energy Conference 2007, to be held over two days in Dunboyne Castle, Dunboyne, Co. Meath, on Tuesday 6th March, and Clonmel Park Hotel, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary, on Wednesday 7th March.

As her attendance at the conference is during National Tree Week, Minister of State Wallace will also plant a tree at each location to mark the Week. She will also address the National Forestry Conference being held in the Heritage Hotel, Portlaoise, on Friday 9th March. National Tree Week, Seachtain Náisiúnta na gCrann, runs from 4th to 10th March.

National Tree Week '08 - Trees Water Life

‘Cuireann crainn uisce ar fáil don bheatha’

National Tree Week 2008 will be held from 2 - 8 March 2008.

The aim of **National Tree Week** is to raise awareness about trees and encourage local communities and local authorities to participate in over 300 events which will take place around the country during the week.

Events include forest walks, tree-planting ceremonies, workshops, talks, competitions and even tree plantathons.

Over 15,000 trees sponsored by Coillte will be distributed to community groups by the local authorities all over Ireland.

National tree week is sponsored by **Coillte** and **O2**.

Every year, a theme for National tree week is selected and, for 2008, the theme is **'Trees Water Life'**. Water is the substance that makes our planet unique within our solar system. It is the source of all life and, without it, life as we know it, could not exist. From single cell organisms to the largest plants, water is the common ingredient.

Mature trees - the largest plants on the globe - have an added relationship with water that many lesser plants do not have. Trees and woodlands, rich in diversity, play an important role in protecting our waterways. They filter out solids and absorb excessive nutrients, purifying water before it flows into streams and rivers and helping to make it suitable for drinking.

Forests also act like massive sponges - soaking up excessive rainfall and releasing it into waterways slowly over time - thereby helping to prevent flooding in villages and towns downstream.

Carefully designed woodlands along streams, rivers and lakes, can also benefit fish and other forms of life in the water, providing food and cooling shade. In addition, many of our well-known native trees - such as alder and willow - are closely associated with streams, rivers and lakes, forming an important part of our inland waterway heritage and landscape.

© **2008 Tree Council of Ireland**

**Seismograph House,
Rathfarnham Castle,
Rathfarnham,
Dublin 14.**

Ph. **00353 1 493 1313**

Fx. **00353 1 493 1317**

Email: trees@treecouncil.ie

Web: <http://www.treecouncil.ie/>

National Tree Week ECO-UNESCO

In celebration of the National Tree week, ECO-UNESCO is organising a day dedicated to the theme: Trees and Climate Change - How do they relate? We'll have an interactive and practical day filled with games, fun, discussion activities and tree planting! Especially for you... and the trees!

Target group

Young people aged between 12 and 18 years old

Fees

ECO-UNESCO Members - FREE

Non-Members - €5

Venue

To be confirmed

Bookings close

29th February 2008

Contact

Claire Lyons or **Joana Cunha**
Environmental Youth Officers
ECO-UNESCO

26 Clare St, Dublin 2

Tel: **+353 1 662 54 91**

Fax: **+353 1 662 54 93**

E-mail: info@ecounesco.ie

Web:

[links](#)

[Woodlands - Notice Nature](#)

[Trees - Early Traditions and Placenames - Dr. Kay Muhr MMV](#)

[The Woodland History Survey](#)

[Marie DoyForestry in Changing Societies in Europe: the Republic of Ireland - Marie Doyle](#)