

A Stone for Ireland and Northern Ireland?

Many regions (countries, provinces, states and districts) have designated a special stone to represent themselves. Examples are Norway (Larvikite), Wisconsin (Granite)...

Such designations draw attention to the stone resources of a region, the landscape which underpins them and the geoscience which interprets and gives them special significance. On the occasion of the **International Year of Planet Earth (2008)**, the Irish National Committee is requesting views on whether it should seek the designation of a stone or stones and, if so, which one(s).

What is your view?

Should we designate a stone for:

- * Ireland
- * Northern Ireland

Below are some suggestions which you might like to consider:

Suggestions for Ireland:

Carboniferous limestone

- * ubiquitous, covering 2/3 country;
- * uniting blanket across NW/SE Iapetus suture (i.e covers the join);
- * widespread building stone: St. Canice's, Kilkenny, Daniel O'Connell headstone in Glasnevin Cemetery, etc; being used in Amsterdam for dyke refurbishment;
- * distinctive decorative stone: 'Kilkenny Black', 'Carlow Blue';
- * Fossils galore;
- * Holy wells galore.

Granite

- * Found in the east and west;
- * Distinctive, building and decorative stone
- * Marks the welding of two halves of Ireland;

Old Red Sandstone (ORS)

- * Represents first rocks after Ireland's amalgamation, deriving from huge mountain chain;

Volcanics

- * Representing bringing the two halves of Ireland together: Lambay porphyry – pre-cursor to Iapetus closure;

Connemara Marble

- * Obvious aesthetic value;
- * Building, decorative uses;
- * Comparisons with Norway's National Rock 'Larvikite', but comparatively reduced areal distribution in Ireland – only in the west;

Suggestions for Northern Ireland:

Basalt

- * Witness of the opening of the Atlantic Ocean;
- * Flood basalt type
- * Ireland's youngest volcanic activity
- * The Antrim Plateau and the Giant's Causeway

Chalk

- * Formed in subtropical latitudes
- * Prominent white cliffs around the Antrim and Causeway coast, but also in scarp faces east of Limavady, Co. Derry and outcropping in hills west and north of Belfast;
- * quarried in Ballintoy and Larrybane Head to be burnt in limekilns for use as agricultural lime

Views are welcome up to **15 October 2008** and may be emailed to Sophie Preteseille at sophie.preteseille@gsi.ie.

Please note that comments may be placed on the <http://www.planetearth.ie/> website and contributors identified.

Stone is normally designated by the relevant geological survey and so, following the conclusion of this consultation, the Committee will communicate its suggestions/recommendations to the Directors of GSI and GSNI for their consideration and action as appropriate.

The year 2008 has been dedicated by the United Nations as the International Year of Planet Earth (IYPE).

The aim of IYPE is to promote the importance of geoscience to the wider public

International Year of Planet Earth

<http://www.yearofplanetearth.org/>

Planet Earth.ie

www.planetearth.ie

UNESCO - Earth Sciences

<http://www.unesco.org/science/earth/iype.shtml>

a few links

Ballinarry Coal Mine

<http://www.ballinarry.net/Slieveardagh%20history/the-mines.html>

Coalmining in Castlecomber

<http://www.sip.ie/sip019B/index1.htm>

Geology of Northern Ireland

http://www.ni-environment.gov.uk/landscape/earth_science/geology.htm

Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI)

<http://www.gsi.ie/>

Geology & Mineral Potential - Department of Communications, Energy & Natural Resources

<http://www.dcenr.gov.ie/Natural/Exploration+and+Mining+Division/Geology+and+Mineral+Potential/>

Generalized Geology of Ireland showing Significant Mineral Deposits

http://www.dcmnr.gov.ie/NR/rdonlyres/D041A7AF-62C1-4467-9C0B-7F128338D440/0/sig_mi_1.pdf

Introduction to Northern Ireland Geology

http://www.geographyinaction.co.uk/Geology%20files/Geol_index.html

Natural Resources of Ireland

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Natural_resources_of_Ireland

Northern Ireland British Geological Survey (BGS)

http://www.bgs.ac.uk/research/what/UKGeology_NI.html

The Mineral Industry of Ireland in 2001

<http://minerals.usgs.gov/minerals/pubs/country/2001/eimyb01.pdf>

The Geology of Ancient Ireland

<http://mockingbird.creighton.edu/english/micsun/IrishResources/geology.htm>

The Mineral Industry of Ireland - *Harold R. Newman*

<http://minerals.usgs.gov/minerals/pubs/country/2001/eimyb01.pdf>

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We welcome interesting links -

mail to: info@aughty.org