

Sessile Oak

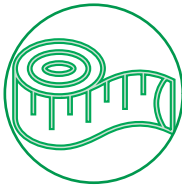
Habitat Hero



Common Name: (Sessile) Oak Tree
Irish Name: Dair ghaelach
Scientific Name: Quercus petraea

Seen in Ireland:

Flower: May
 Fruit: October



Sessile Oak trees can grow to 40m tall, and have leaves between 8-12 cm long with a short stalk of 10-12mm



There are small Oak woods in most counties. Sessile Oak is found more commonly on poor acid soils, in hilly regions. It is the main species to be found in Ireland's most familiar woodlands, e.g. Killarney.



Sessile Oak is found more commonly on poor acid soils, in hilly regions, in woodlands and hedgerows. Native Oaks are an important habitat for hundreds of insects and many birds and mammals. •Photosynthesis is the process in which green plants use sunlight to make their own food.



Oak can live for over 1,000 years! In Ireland, the Brian Boru oak in Tuamgrany (Clare) is thought to be the oldest Oak at over 1000 years. But it is a Pedunculate Oak.

Sessile Oak Life Cycle

Oak trees are **deciduous** – this means they drop their leaves in Autumn and **Winter**. This allows them time to rest while there is very little energy available from the sun.

Oak trees start to grow new shoots and leaves in **Spring** when they get energy from the extra sunlight at this time of year

These acorns will grow big and fat and eventually fall off the tree naturally by the end of **Autumn**, if not taken by an animal before then.

Tiny flowers grow in late Spring; male flowers appear as dangling **catkins**; female flowers occur in stiff reddish stalk-less clusters. Each tree will have both male and female flowers.

The male flowers spread their pollen using the wind - when a female flower receives pollen it can then produce seeds. Oak tree seeds are called 'Acorns' and form in the **summer**.



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Some more Facts:



- The Sessile Oak is one of two native Oaks.
- There are three key ways to recognise the Sessile Oak:
 - 1) it has acorns on short or no stalks,
 - 2) the leaf outline is only lightly grooved
 - 3) leaves are found on long stalks.
- The other native Oak, the Pedunculate Oak, has acorns which grow on long stalks and has deeply grooved leaves on very short stalks.
- One in every five town-land names in Ireland refers to a tree!
- More than 10% of these have some link to the word 'dair', the Irish word for oak, Cill Dara, the Irish for Kildare means 'Church of the Oak'. Can you think of any others?
- A single oak tree can provide food and shelter for over 600 life forms, from birds, bees, butterflies and mammals, to different species of fungi, mosses, lichens, and insects.
- Oak Trees, rely on animals such as Squirrels and Jackdaws to spread acorns far away from the parent tree. Animals do this accidentally!
- For example, when a squirrel has eaten its fill of acorns, it will then collect extras and bury them in the ground for later, when food will be scarce in the winter. If the winter is mild, or the animal is forgetful, and can't remember the storage place, the acorns get left in the ground. They then become new Oak Trees in Spring!
- Oak is associated with ancient settlement in Ireland. They are found near crannogs, and even as their post. Oak roads have been recovered under bogs.
- The Celtic druids held the oak tree as their most sacred tree.
- Oak is a symbol of kingship as the mighty oak is associated with strength.

