

# The Biodiversity Way

Horse Chestnut trees produce a fruit that we call a nut, or 'conker'



## Squirrel Wood (Panel 2)

**Squirrel Wood** is part of Ryevale Lawns housing estate but it was once part of the large private demesne of Ryevale House. This house was built circa 1741 and was then known as 'Robertsville', after its owner, Robert Lawe, Barrack-master of Ireland. (It is private property and is not on the Biodiversity Way).

The presence of older trees such as the **Atlas Cedar**, **Yew**, and ornamental **Cherries**, testify to Squirrel Wood's affluent origins. Today, it has evolved into typical deciduous woodland, dominated by such species as **Sycamore**, **Alder**, **Horse Chestnut**, **Beech**, and **Hazel**. Other trees found here include Ash, Oak, Common Osier, Mountain Ash (Rowan) and Lime, but some introduced types such as **Lawson Cypress** and **Purple Plum** are also present.

An understorey of **Holly**, **Elder**, **Laurel** and **Rhododendron** is establishing in some areas. The ground flora typically includes species such as Cow Parsley and Ivy, with plenty of seedling Oak, Beech and Sycamore sprouting up.

The main tree types in Squirrel Wood are labeled with both their common and botanical names. Their 'family' name is also shown. See if you can identify the various types before looking at the labels.



The Grey Squirrel can be found all around Leixlip wherever there are stands of trees. For now, there are no native Red Squirrels in the town



Honeysuckle (left) is a woody climbing plant that can be found scrambling up smaller trees



The attractive and colourful leaves and blossoms of the Purple Plum tree



Cow Parsley (above) is a classic May-flowering plant abundant in ditches and woodland clearings. On a warm, Spring day, the scent from these plants is quite strong: it's been described as 'earthy', 'a hint of aniseed', and 'malty'



Sycamore leaf, showing the classic signs of the relatively harmless Tar Spot Fungus



Dog Violet (above left) and Primrose (above right) are both classic Spring flowers found on Irish woodland floors



Ivy berries



Ivy 'carpet'

The floor of Squirrel Wood is covered with Common Ivy (*Hedera helix*). Ivy is classed as an evergreen vine, and it makes full use of trees as a support. Sometimes this growth can become excessive. Where there are no trees, it will happily cover the woodland floor. Ground Ivy (*Glechoma hederacea*) is a different plant: a small and pretty member of the mint family



A young willow tree taking root



The Biodiversity Way is a Leixlip Tidy Towns Association and Intel Pride of Place initiative.

The Leixlip Biodiversity Way is approx. 1.4 kms long. It is all made up of pavement and tarred pathways. As such it is suitable for everyone.



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