

NATIONAL TREE WEEK

4-10 MARCH 2007

Every year the Tree Council of Ireland organise a **National Tree Week** to make us more aware of our natural environment. **National Tree Week 2007** runs from 4-10 March and will be launched by An Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern T.D. at Farmleigh House, in Dublin. National Tree Week, jointly sponsored by Coillte and O2 Ireland, is in its 23rd year and this year's theme, "*Trees for energy*", aims to highlight the importance of trees in everyday life.

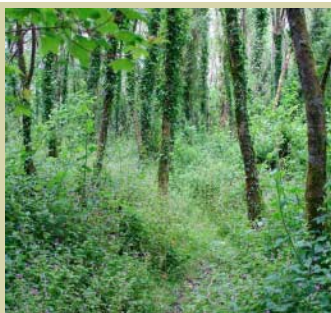
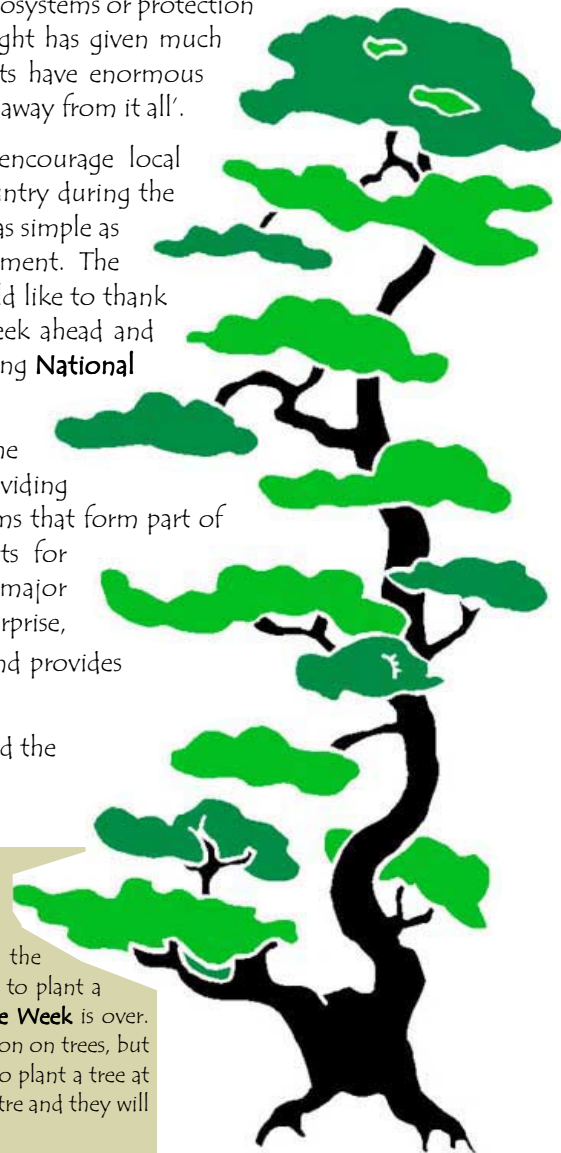
There are over 300 events organised across the country as part of **National Tree Week**, including forest walks, seminars and talks, workshops, tree planting ceremonies and exhibitions. All events organised by sponsors are free of charge and open to all members of the public. In addition, over 15,000 trees, supplied by Coillte, will be distributed to schools and community groups by every local authority in the country. Free events guides are available from O2 outlets and Coillte offices.

The advantages of planting more trees are not just confined to the survival of ecosystems or protection from severe weather. The beauty of our trees and woodlands in their own right has given much inspiration to writers, artists and many others over the years. Equally, forests have enormous recreational value as places to enjoy walks, nature trails or quite literally "to get away from it all".

The aim of **National Tree Week** is to raise awareness about trees and encourage local communities to participate in the events, which will take place around the country during the week. Trees are an essential part of our environment and by doing something as simple as planting a tree, everyone can play his or her part in helping the environment. The Executive Director of the Tree Council of Ireland, Mr. John Mc Loughlin, would like to thank everybody who has worked hard on the various events coming up in the week ahead and would ask everyone to either take part in a local event or take five minutes during **National Tree Week** to contemplate the important role that trees play in our lives.

Trees are recognised as one of the most essential parts of our environment for the role they play in cleaning air, preventing the build-up of greenhouse gases, providing renewable energy and materials for building, furniture and all the wooden items that form part of everyday life. In addition trees play an essential role in providing habitats for thousands of plants and animals and stabilising soil as well as being a major contributor to the economy. With 14,000 farmers now having a forestry enterprise, the forestry industry is currently worth over €550m per annum, in Ireland and provides jobs for over 10,000 people, mainly in rural Ireland.

Further information on **National Tree Week** and the events taking place around the country is available on www.treecouncil.ie



Too Late for National Tree Week?

National Tree Week is a good time to focus on the importance of trees in our lives and is also a great time to plant a tree, but you might be reading this when **National Tree Week** is over. Not to worry! The week is designed to focus your attention on trees, but you can discover them all year round. And if you want to plant a tree at other times of the year, check with your local garden centre and they will advise you as to the best times.