

CELEBRATE NATIONAL TREE DAY WITH HOLLY TREES!

6th OCTOBER 2022



OPW

Holly, Cuileann, *Ilex aquifolium*

Holly is a native tree to Ireland and also to Britain, Europe, North Africa and western Asia. It can grow up to 15m in height and live to be 300 years old! Holly is often found in woodland and forms an understory beneath the canopy of taller trees. The dark green shiny leaves on holly trees produce a dense foliage which provides good protection for nesting birds. The leaf litter can also be used by mammals such as hedgehogs for winter hibernation. The trees drop leaves throughout the seasons but as they remain green all year round they are known as evergreens.



Holly trees are dioecious meaning trees have either male or female flowers. Both produce creamy flowers but it's only the female that produces red berries in winter. The flowers produce pollen and nectar for pollinating insects in spring and early summer and the red berries provide food for birds and small mammals in winter. Smooth leaves at the top of the tree are also a food source for deer during the winter months.

Fill in the blanks with the words below!

LEAVES

SMOOTH

HEDGEROWS

CHRISTMAS

THRUSHES

BARK

Holly is commonly found in woodland, scrub and _____.

Leaves on younger holly trees are prickly whereas the leaves on older trees are often _____.

The red berries on holly trees are a favourite of many birds including _____ and blackbirds.

Holly _____ are a food source for the caterpillars of the holly blue butterfly.

Ivy and holly are used to decorate homes at _____ time.

The _____ is smooth and brown and often has small brown 'warts'.

In the past, it was considered to be unlucky to cut down holly trees. They were also considered to be charms that would keep you safe from witches!!!

Find a holly tree in the Castle Park! (near the coffee kiosk & from there along the path to the pond)

What colour and shape are the leaves? _____

What colour is the bark? _____ Can you see anything growing on it? _____

Do you like this tree? _____ Why? _____

Why don't you draw a holly tree and show its leaves, flowers or berries?



Holly trees produce the whitest wood and it is often used to make engravings and walking sticks!

Find the words in the wordsearch below!

BERRY PRICKLY BIRDS WINTER
HEDGEHOG POLLEN LEAF FLOWER

F	W	S	P	R	I	C	K	L	Y	F	Q
T	I	B	E	R	R	Y	P	L	F	L	J
I	N	G	R	P	O	L	L	E	N	O	G
S	T	B	I	R	D	S	B	A	I	W	D
K	E	P	D	K	T	W	V	F	X	E	L
W	R	H	E	D	G	E	H	O	G	R	X

For further information check out....

www.treecouncil.ie

www.treeday.ie