



Landscape, fill the valley streams like the pile upon a mountain port's coast. - J. MorcaSue

The suns of Ireland, that restless whispering you never set away from, seep out of low bushes and grass, reacherbellus and fern, uninkling bog pools, scraping cree branches, light hunting cloud, soumo hounding sight, a hano ceaselessly combing and stroking the

SACRED TREE

Here is the crab tree,
Firm and erect,
In spite of the thin soil,
In spite of neglect.
The twisted root grapples
For sap with the rock
And draws the hard juice
To the succulent top:
Here are wild apples,
Here's a tart crop!

Of all who pass by it
How few in it see
A westering remnant
Of day when Lough Neagh
Flowed up the long dingles
Its blossom had lit,
Old days of glory
Time cannot repeat;
And therefore it mingles
The bitter and sweet.

It takes from the West
Wind
The thrust of the main;
It makes from the tension
Of sky and of plain
Of what clay enacted,
Of living alarm,
A vitalized symbol
Of earth and of storm,
Of Chaos contracted
To intricate form.

No outlandish grafting
That ever grew soft
In a sweet air of Persia,
Of safe Roman croft;
Unsheltered by steading,
Rock-rooted and grown,
A great tree of Erin,
It stands up alone,
A forest tree spreading
Where forests are gone.



Wild Apple
Malus sylvestris
Ull

Unbreakable wrestler
What sapling or herb
Has core of such sweet-ness
And fruit so acerb;
So grim a transmitter
Of life through mishap,
That one wonders
whether
If that in the sap,
Is sweet or is bitter
Which makes it stand up.

-The Crab Tree
by Oliver Saint John Gogarty

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BURREN

...I named for you all the wild flowers of the Burren
I had seen in one day: thyme, valerian, loosestrife,
Meadowsweet, tway blade, crowfoot, ling, angelica,
Herb Robert, marjoram, cow parsley, sundew, vetch,
Mountain avens, wood sage, ragged robin, stitchwort,
Yarrow, lady's bedstraw, bindweed, bog pimpernel.



Bloody Cranesbill
Geranium sanguineum
Crobb

-The Ice-Cream Man by Michael Longley

Stony seaboard, far and foreign,
Stony hills poured over space,
Stony outcrop of the Burren,
Stones in every fertile place,
Little fields with boulders dotted,
Grey-stone shoulders saffron-spotted.



Early Spotted Orchid
Orchis maculata
Magairlin

-Ireland with Emily by John Betjeman



Wild Apple
Malus sylvestris
Ull

Red Clover
Trifolium pratense
Scamur

Primrose
Primula vulgaris
Sabbharcin

Bloody cranesbill
Geranium sanguineum
Crobb

Kingcup
Caltha palustris
Lus buí bealtaine

Ireland is a small island, but one that includes a rich variety of landscapes. This exhibit demonstrates a number of those landscapes and their native plant communities – an upland moor of juniper and heather; a bog of iris and sundew; a lowland limestone Burren of maidenhair fern and orchid. Of particular note is the lone tree – 'scaoh' or 'craobh' – which has held a position of importance from early celtic mythology. The ecology of these landscapes, and the deep connection to Irish folklore is explored. Evocative images of the Irish 'place' – stone, hedge, wall - are also revealed through the great tradition of Irish landscape poetry.

BOG

We have no prairies
To slice a big sun at evening ---
Everywhere the eye concedes to
Encroaching horizon,

Is wooed into the cyclops' eye
Of a tarn. Our unfenced country
Is bog that keeps crusting
Between the sights of the sun.

They've taken the skeleton
Of the Great Irish Elk
Out of the peat, set it up,
An astounding crate full of air.

Butter sunk under
More than a hundred years
Was recovered salty and white.
The ground itself is kind, black butter

Melting and opening underfoot,
Missing its last definition
By millions of years.
They'll never dig coal here,

Only the waterlogged trunks
Of great firs, soft as pulp.
Our pioneers keep striking
Inwards and downwards,

Every layer they strip
Seems camped on before.
The bogholes might be Atlantic
seepage.

The wet centre is bottomless.

-Bogland by Seamus Heaney



Kingcup
Caltha palustris
Lus buí bealtaine