



NATIVE WOODLANDS CONFERENCE 2018
20 Years A-Growing: Celebrating Ireland's Native Woodlands



Lar Behan, None-So-Hardy (Forestry) Ltd.

In None-So-Hardy we take the long view *“Grow Quality Forests”*



One year Native Irish Birch



Description of Native Woodland Scheme

- The scheme serves to protect, enhance and expand Ireland's native woodland resource and its associated biodiversity
- The Native Woodland Scheme aimed at encouraging the proactive protection and expansion of Ireland's native woodland resource and associated biodiversity, using appropriate "close to nature" silviculture
- The Native Woodland Scheme (NWS) has the potential to significantly reverse the decline of Ireland's native woodlands and to secure a healthy, vibrant resource for future generations

- The annual collection of acorns is now a very important part of the nursery's annual programme and forms basis of our native Oak supply



Nets placed for the collection of Acorns

- In recent years we have contracted collectors in Clare and Galway to collect on our behalf



Acorns drying

Some of the species Native to Ireland

- Birches
- Bird Cherry
- Blackthorn
- Hawthorn
- Hazel
- Holly
- Pedunculate Oak
- Scots Pine
- Sessile Oak
- Whitethorn
- Wild Cherry



Why did we decide to take part in the NWS?



3yr Native Oak

- The Native Woodland Scheme (NWS) is of increasing importance to the future of the afforestation programme
- We can also increase the use of Scots pine in these areas and this could be very beneficial in terms of flood mitigation for the years ahead
- The most important species of this scheme is native Irish Oak. A major obstacle to the development of the programme is the shortage of native Oak seed
- We are not always able to stay ahead of the planting programme. However, to secure supply for any fallow years we compensate by managing our crops for one and two-year plants any time we gather a significant crop

Where is the seed collected?

- The seed is collected mostly in Tomnafinnogue Wood. Tomnafinnogue comprises some 66 hectares of mixed woodland, dominated by mature, single stemmed sessile Oak, and is a potentially important FRM (Forest Reproductive Material) source
- We also have some good Hawthorn sites in Coollattin, Co Wicklow. Our Rowan and Cherry collection is mainly around Clonegal, Co Carlow. We also collect Hazel, Guelder Rose and Spindle in Co Clare



Tomnafinnogue

When is the seed collected?

- Cherry and Rowan – August
- Hazel, Blackthorn and Crab-apple – September
- Oak and Whitethorn – October, November



Wild Cherry Seed

The seed is brought back to our base in Shillelagh to be cleaned, weighed and then let it dry.

Once the seed is ready, it is sent to our nursery in Ballymurn to be sown or processed.

CHALLENGES

Acorn Collection by None-So-Hardy

Our main challenge is the continuity of supply of acorns. The most years are very sporadic and vary greatly from year to year

Mast Year	Amount Collected	Plants Produced
2010	304.5 Kg	31,000
2011	0 Kg	0
2012	0 Kg	0
2013	2,816 Kg	285,000
2014	363 Kg	35,000
2015	252 Kg	24,000
2016	5,104.5 Kg	450,000
2017	7,477 Kg	750,000



The main obstacles that we faced when gathering the seed

- Access to the seed
- Wild Animals / Predation
- Predicting the Demand



Whitethorn berries



Crab-apple drying



Blackthorn berries

Our aims for the future of our seed collecting

- We aim to provide customers with a two year old native Irish Oak plant between 50 to 80 cm tall as opposed to a one-year old plant 30 to 50 cm tall which have been the norm for these native plants
- We are committed to supplying plants to underpin the future of the NWS
- Apart from fulfilling an obvious demand for plants it also gives us a deeper insight to the requirements for growing these plants and helps us form a better understanding of these species. It is also very interesting and rewarding seeing plants going out the gate grown from seed which have been nurtured to this stage right from their initial stage as fruit on the tree



Birch Seed Orchard

- The Birch seed orchard has been established in a large purpose built tunnel (constructed by local company D Plant Horticulture) in Ballymurn
- The orchard consists of 90 individual clones replicated 3 times. The clones are planted in 50L pots and are irrigated through a drip feed irrigation system. They are again laid out in a randomised design



15 year old thinned Birch stand from improved material
(Planted in Tipperary 2001)

Scots Pine

Pinus Sylvestris

We have an annual target of
15-20Kg for Scots Pine seed





Thank You

