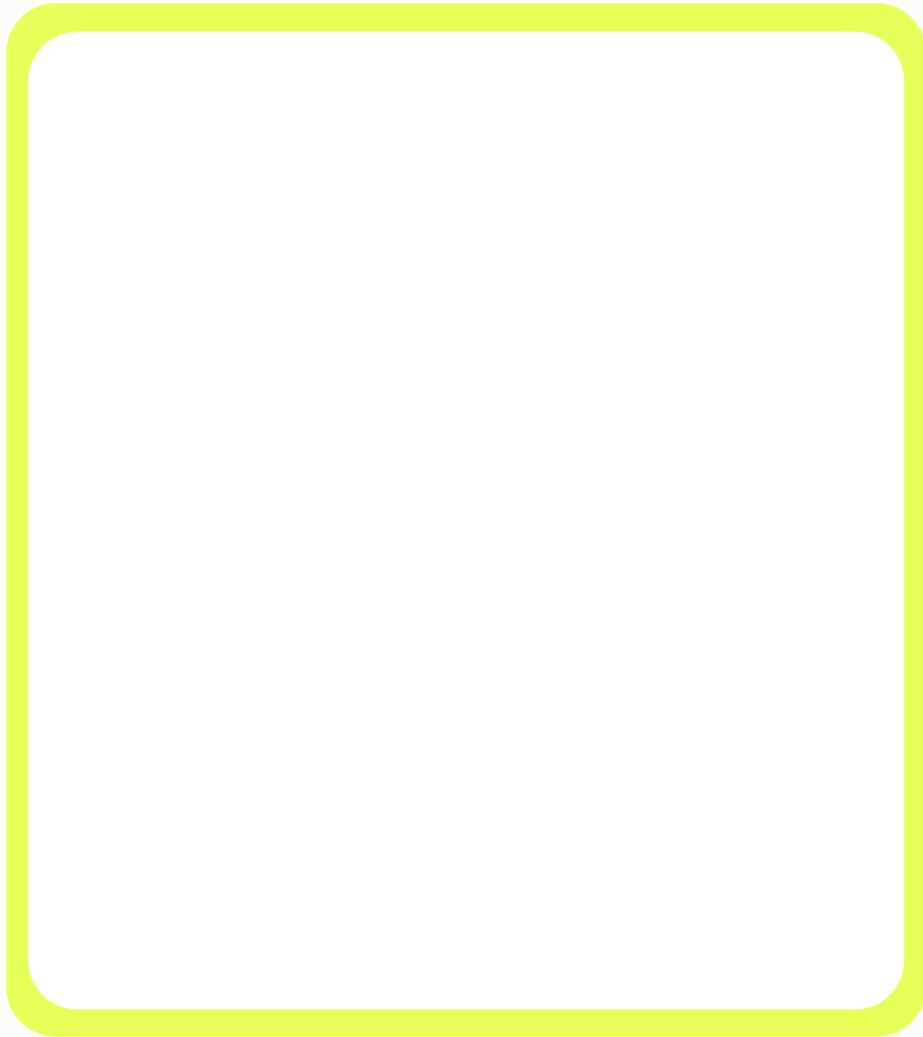


Draw your favourite flower, plant or tree
from the Botanic Gardens below.
Write its name underneath too!



National Botanic Gardens of Ireland Childrens' Trail



Early spring is a busy time of year! Underneath the soil, seeds and bulbs are starting to stretch up towards the sunlight. More and more green shoots appear each day suddenly blossoming into the first flowers of the year. The days are getting longer; the clocks will be going forward soon and you might hear the dawn chorus each morning as you wake up!

Follow the numbers on the map, to find each stop and answer all the questions or follow the instructions!



1. Follow your nose!

Can you find the tiny waxy flowers on this wintersweet shrub by its scent? Instead of putting all its energy into making big colourful flowers, it keeps its flowers small and uses its scent to attract bees and insects to pollinate it!



2. What colour are the buds on this weeping ash tree? In Viking Dublin ash was one of the native woods they used to build their houses. The Vikings took care of the forests and the forests took care of them by providing lots of wood for their homes and hearths.



9. This area of the arboretum has different species of hazel tree. Look at some of the branches and see if you can find some yellow catkins that look like tiny lambs' tails. These are the male flowers and if you tap a catkin some pollen might just fall out!



10. See if you can spot 2 different types of waterfowl at the pond. Be careful not to fall in though! If you are super-lucky you might see a mandarin duck who is native to South-East Asia.



11. Down by the pond, find a tall tree to stand underneath. Can you find its name on its label? Close your eyes and feel the earth beneath your feet and wiggle your toes. Take a deep breath in and let it out slowly. Name 3 sounds you can hear.



6. As the temperature starts to rise, queen bumblebees will emerge from hibernation. This is the time they start to find a nest and forage for food! What flowers can they collect pollen from at this time of year?



3. Can you spot some delicate pale pink cherry blossom flowers? What happens to the petals when the wind blows? In Japan they celebrate spring and the beauty of nature by meeting friends and family for picnics in parks filled with hundreds of these beautiful trees.



7. Underneath the trees you will find purple and white flowers that dance in the wind! In English we call them wood anemones but the Irish for them is *Lus na gaoithe* or wind flowers! As they look like they dance in the wind, can you make up a spring dance to welcome them?

4. Snowdrops are one of the first flowers to push their way up through the earth and bloom. They contain a protein which stops their cells freezing and helps them survive the frost and snow! We tend to think snowdrops are pure white, but look closer! Can you see another colour on the petals?



8. You are now in the arboretum – a part of the gardens especially for trees. There are lots of different types of trees here, planted beside their family members. At this time of year, the trees are beginning to awaken after the winter. Can you find any green buds appearing on their branches?



5. While we wait for the leaves on the oaks to return, lots of sunlight can reach the forest floor so plants can grow there. Underneath the oaks you might just find a carpet of spring flowers. What flowers can you see? What colours are they?



Path closures:

