

# Pedunculate oak *Dair ghallda*



Conservation Volunteers  
Northern Ireland

*Quercus robur*



## DESCRIPTION

A large deciduous tree, native to most of Europe. It grows up to 40m (120ft) in height.

The leaf stalks are very short, while the acorns are borne on long stalks. The male and female flowers occur on the same plant and open in late April with the young leaves. The acorns ripen in October, shortly before the leaves fall.

Pedunculate oak likes heavy clays and loams and would be the dominant tree on suitable soils. It does not thrive on very dry, shallow soils, but is otherwise drought-tolerant. On wet soils it grows well as long as the ground is not waterlogged for long periods.

## PROPAGATION

Collect the acorns from the ground when they fall. Try to collect only those that look healthy. Store them temporarily in containers with good air circulation, eg. hessian bags. They can heat up and die otherwise.

Acorns will germinate very quickly, even when stored in a cool place. Sow them as soon as possible about 5cm deep and protect from mice, jays and pheasants.

The young trees should emerge in early May and can grow as much as 30cm in one year.

## INTERESTING FACTS

- Pedunculate oak is the largest and longest-lived of our native trees and would have been the most common tree in our ancient woodlands.
- Very tolerant of cutting, it grows well after coppicing, but it must not be cut too frequently.
- A second flush of growth, known traditionally as the Lammas growth, coincides each year with the Celtic Lammas festival on 1st August.
- Its timber has been used in Ireland for over 7,000 years.

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