



## Top five Coillte forests for thrillseekers this summer

- *Mountain biking, ziplining, canoeing and wild camping - ideal activities for outdoor adventurers*
- *Top forests include: Wicklow's Ballinastoe, Cork's Farran, Roscommon's Lough Key, Laois's Glenbarrow and Dublin's Tibbradden Wood*
- *56% of Irish adults are unaware there are 260 recreational forests they can visit mostly for free or relatively low cost with a range of activities available*

**Date: 30 July 2021**

Coillte is highlighting its top five forests for outdoor activities which are sure to get the blood pumping this summer. From mountain biking to ziplining, canoeing to wild camping, Coillte's forests have something to offer adventurers of all ages.

- #A Red C survey reveals 56% of Irish adults did not know there are 260 Coillte recreational (with marked walking trails) forests they can visit.
- Entry to Coillte's forests is free for pedestrians and cyclists with onsite carparking available for just €5\* for the larger forest parks. Annual membership to visit all forest parks, on an unlimited basis is €40\*.

*"Coillte is delighted to offer a range of outdoor escapes for adventure lovers in some of the most beautiful places in Ireland this summer," said Deborah Meghen, director of recreation, Coillte. "Enjoying the outdoors and nature has been a huge benefit for people's wellbeing in the past year and we hope it continues throughout the summer and beyond," she said.*

### **1. Coillte's Ballinastoe Forest, County Wicklow (344 hectares, c40 car parking spaces)**

- If you're a cyclist looking for a serious challenge this summer and some beautiful scenery, visit the mountain bike track at Ballinastoe.
- It offers stunning views of Calary Common, the Sugarloaf mountain and Lough Tay as you twist and turn beneath the forest canopy of this challenging and thrill inducing world class track.
- Not for the fainthearted, the single-track trails feature plenty of ups and downs, tight turns and technical elements on different terrains.
- Afterwards you can relax with a picnic or enjoy a barista coffee from the café.
- Bike hire is available on site.

## **2. Coillte's Farran Forest Park, County Cork (45 hectares with c150 car parking spaces)**

- Farran Forest Park offers a treetop high wire adventure course, great for families who like to challenge themselves or tougher options for adrenaline seekers.
- It has unrivalled views of Inniscarra Lake and the surrounding countryside.
- Try one of the 86 adventure activities on the aerial trail with over 800 metres of Ziplines for you to enjoy.
- Younger visitors will love a picnic at the onsite playground and the wonderful wildlife enclosure with a herd of red and fallow deer along with some very friendly ducks.

## **3. Coillte's Lough Key Forest Park, County Roscommon (250 hectares, c300 car parking spaces)**

- Coillte's Lough Key Forest Park allows water lovers row on the lake to explore the many islands of Lough Key.
- Whether you're a keen kayaker or just a casual canoeist, boating across Lough Key can be the perfect adventure for family and friends.
- There is a good forest camp site for camper vans and caravans.
- If boating is not your thing why not try the other activities including ziplining, a treetop walk or hire an electric bike to explore the forest cycling trails?
- Afterwards enjoy some hot food from the outdoor food truck, visit the coffee cart and confectionery kiosk or bring your own feast for the picnic tables.

## **4. Coillte's Glenbarrow, County Laois (160 hectares, c30 car parking spaces)**

- If you're looking to get close to nature this summer, look no further than wild camping at Glenbarrow in County Laois.
- This untouched spot is ideal for visitors with a real sense of adventure and for those walking along the Slieve Blooms Way.
- Wild camping is a great way to disconnect from everyday life and escape the confines of a campsite. Coillte allows this on a limited number of sites across Ireland and Glenbarrow is arguably the hidden gem of them all.
- Experience nature at first hand, deer, squirrels, buzzards and badgers are some of the wildlife here.
- Pitch up a tent, remember to [Leave No Trace](#) and enjoy sleeping under the stars.

## **5. Coillte's Tibbradden Wood, County Dublin (148 hectares, c50 car parking spaces)**

- Tibbradden Wood lies between Cruagh and Kilmashogue high in the Dublin mountains but just 30 minutes from the city centre by car or bus (44B).
- A ziplining adventure course gives an unrivalled view of the area's natural beauty from high up in the trees, some of which date back to 1910.
- The aerial course offers hours of fun-filled experiences in a healthy outdoor setting for adults and children from age 7 upwards.
- Try the climbing poles and walls, swing into cargo nets, balance on a rope bridge, hurtle down a zipwire, or even ride a BMX bicycle across a treetop bridge.
- If you're feeling fit, you might like to hike to the top of Tibbradden Wood where visitors can overlook Dublin Bay and see as far as Howth.

**Top tips:**

- Plan ahead and know which forest you want to visit, what you want to do and prepare for a potentially fabulous day out.
- Consider purchasing the Coillte Access Card if you think you/your family/friends would be frequent forest visitors throughout the year. [accesscard@coillte.ie](mailto:accesscard@coillte.ie)

Coillte operates a [Leave no Trace](#) policy and asks all our visitors to bring their litter home and leave the forests as you found them for everyone to enjoy.

In addition, to prevent forest fires and the destruction of trees and wildlife, forest visitors should not use barbeques or open fires at any stage.

You can find more details and maps of these 5 forests and all of Coillte's recreational areas on our website: <http://www.coillte.ie/>

**ENDS//**

For further information or to arrange an interview with a Coillte representative, please contact: Adam Hurley, Carr Communications - [adam@carrcommunications.ie](mailto:adam@carrcommunications.ie) / 083 459 5885

**Notes for Editors**

# A RED C poll was conducted amongst 1,000 adults, aged 18+ between March 3 and 10, 2021.

\*There is a car-parking fee of €5 at some forest parks, which typically helps maintain the car park, playgrounds, toilets and café's. Note the car parking fee is payable by contactless payment card or online payment app - coins and cash are no longer accepted. Debit and credit cards are accepted. For app – check out: <https://websales.coillte.ie/>

The Coillte Annual Access card provides unlimited annual entry into the forest parks on a per vehicle basis.