

Exhibition Galleries

Irish Animals

This floor is devoted to the variety of Irish animals, starting with the impressive skeletons of the extinct giant Irish deer. These magnificent animals inhabited a landscape that was shared from time to time with the woolly mammoth, hyena and horse.

The cold climate of the last phase of the ice age put an end to these mammals and all that remains are their bones, found in caves or in sediments beneath our boglands.



When the climate warmed again Ireland was colonised by the animals that fill the rest of the gallery.

Irish mammals occupy the front half of the room. Family groups by the leading Irish taxidermy firm of Williams and Son are firm favourites and include badgers, foxes, pine martens and otters.

Ireland's ancient story is written in its rocks. Cases in the window spaces include fossils 500 million years old. Ancient oceans, deserts and coal swamps each have their stories preserved in stone. Minerals that are used to make the materials in our homes are here, along with gemstones and rocks of all ages.



The walls are lined with birds, some of which are now rare visitors or even extinct in Ireland. The golden eagle from Co. Mayo is from one of the last areas to see these birds until a reintroduction programme commenced almost a century later.

Much of the gallery is dedicated to marine animals including our much admired sunfish and basking shark. The numerous groups of invertebrate animals are also well represented – jellyfish, crabs, starfish and shellfish.

River fish include sturgeon from a very different Liffey, before Dublin changed to the major city it is today. A record specimen of trout weighing 11.8 kilos was caught in 1894 at Lough Ennell, Co. Westmeath and takes pride of place.

Ireland has 16,000 species of insects, which reflects the diversity of these animals. Museum research on their distribution assists in the monitoring of our environment.

Record examples of crabs and lobsters complete the array of marine animals at the back of this floor.



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Museum Floorplan

NOTE:
Plans not
to scale.

Ground Floor



First Floor



Second Floor is NOT accessible to public for safety reasons.

Services

- Reception
- Disabled Toilets
- Toilets
- Baby Changing
- Activity Cart
- Stairs to Floor 1
- Emergency Exits

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Sunday & Monday 1pm to 5pm.
CLOSED
Christmas Day, Good Friday
and St. Stephens Day

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