

This week on Radio Nova we’re chatting about the history of the hedgerow and its vital importance to biodiversity.

**What is the history of Hedgerows in Ireland and why are they so important?**

* Most of Ireland’s hedgerows were planted during the 1700 and 1800s when Acts of Parliament obligated landowners to plant proper permanent boundaries between their properties.
* However, some date back to medieval times and even as early as the Neolithic and Bronze ages.
* In 2010, the Teagasc Hedge Map indicated an area of 482,000 hectares or 6.9% of the total land area in Ireland is held by hedgerows, which included scrub and non-woodland trees. The 2017 National Forest Inventory later used a different methodology to estimate that the national hedgerow and non-forest other wooded land occupy 347,690 ha.
* Hedgerows were previously planted to mark townland boundaries and enclose livestock in fields, however, they are now recognised to also have many ecosystem service benefits.

For example:

* they sequester carbon
* they provide wildlife habitat
* they control flooding
* they improve water quality
* they improve the scenic appearance of our landscape.

**Links for more information:**

[www.hedgerows.ie](http://www.hedgerows.ie)

[www.irishtimes.com/news/environment/ireland-s-historic-hedgerows-the-essential-corridors-of-nature-1.3471425](http://www.irishtimes.com/news/environment/ireland-s-historic-hedgerows-the-essential-corridors-of-nature-1.3471425)

www.farmingfornature.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Irish-Hedgerows-Networks-for-Nature.pdf

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