

The idea is simple. Find a rock or a stone, paint it with whatever you want, a picture, an inspirational message, something that reflects the nature around you, while out on your walk leave your rock for someone to find or create some colour for your garden or windowsill.

Join our County Carlow Rocks Facebook group and share your creation.

 <https://www.facebook.com/groups/457388672295902/>

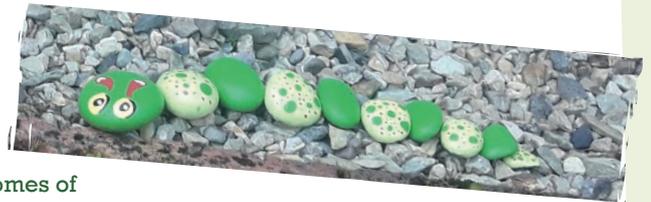
#countycarlowrocks



Material used should be water based to avoid negative environmental impact. Leftover water based (emulsion) paints are ideal. Why not check out what is lurking in your shed or organise to swap colours with a friend or neighbour?

Finding rocks/stones for painting.

You can explore your garden or keep an eye out on your walk for rocks and stones with unusual shapes and smooth textures, but please remember, larger rocks and stones tend to be the habitats or homes of Invertebrates or creepy crawlies and it is important to leave these in place to support our environment and biodiversity.



- Local Garden centres sell bags of decorative stones.
- Smooth stones are easiest to paint on.
- Rocks /stones should be small enough to carry in your hand or pop into your pocket.

Day. 1

- Select and wash your stones & when they are dry, apply your base coat.
- Rocks/stones often need a base coat or undercoat to start with.
- Remember... the paint needs to dry so store your completed pieces somewhere warm and dry.
- We all have, or know someone who has gallons of crème, white or grey emulsion paint in the shed. Ask your neighbours or friends to donate their unused paints or have a rummage in your own shed or garage and reuse what is there.
- You can use old yoghurt pots or any plastic container to hold and mix your paints in. These can be reused many times and when you are finished, wash them out and pop them in your recycling bin.



Day. 2

- Select your message or image to paint on the rock or stone.
- You can find inspiration on YouTube, google images or on Pinterest. These often have simple tutorials too.
- The outline can be done with a pencil and erased afterwards.
- Some designs need to be done in stages.
- Ladybirds for example are simple to do but can need a few coats. Each coat needs to be dry before you start the next phase.
- Some painters use a varnish to seal the colours. Be aware varnish is considered a hazardous material, the same as gloss paint and can harm the environment.



Creating and Connection

Rock painting can be done together as a family or bubble.

Organise a virtual rock painting party with your friends using Zoom or teams' online platforms.

That way you can share ideas, have some fun and still be safe.

The rules of rock hunting are simple when you are out on your walk.

- When you find a stone, take a photo, and post a photo to County Carlow Rocks and use the #countycarlowrocks.
- You can bring it home with you,
- Or leave it where it is for someone else to enjoy.
- or re-hide it.

If you are rock placing, make sure you:

- Place your rock in an area that can easily be discovered by rock hunters.
- There are lots of tiny creatures out and about searching for food and shelter in Nature, watch where you walk.
- Post a photo to County Carlow Rocks and use the #countycarlowrocks



Ladybirds step by step

Supplies:

- ✓ round stones
- ✓ Water based paint (red, black, white, blue)
- ✓ paint brushes



Step 1

Thoroughly clean and dry the stones you find. Paint them with a base coat of any light-coloured paint and allow to dry.



Step 2

When dry, apply your red base coat. You might have to apply 2-3 coats to get the full coverage you need. Remember to let each coat dry before you pop on the next one.



Step 3

If the stone has a narrower area, use it to paint on a black semicircle for the ladybird's face.



Step 4

Now paint a straight black line from the middle of the face all the way to the back.



Step 5

Paint a curved triangle on the back. This will create the slight spreading of the ladybug wings.



Step 6

Gently dot some black spots onto the back. They can be of varying sizes. Depending on the size of the dots you want to create the top of your paint brush or the top of a pencil can be used for this stage.



Step 7

For the face, use a smaller paintbrush, or flip your brush over and use the narrow tip, to dot on white for eyeballs and blue for pupils. Please don't use stick on Google eyes or small bits. Remember, these rocks are for outdoors and birds and small animals can try to eat small plastic parts.



Step 8

Be adventurous, Ladybirds can be any colour... just use what you have stored up at home.



Step 9

Look for other simple ideas and get involved in. #countycarlowrocks



Step 10

Remember to always leave places as you find them. Leave No Trace Ireland have lots of information on their website <https://www.leavenotraceireland.org/>



COVID-19: It is important to stay up to date as social distancing guidelines may change over time. The most up to date advice, information and resources can be found on: www.hse.ie and www.health.gov.ie

Nature on Your Doorstep activity sheets brought to you by Carlow Sports Partnership in collaboration with the Carlow County Council Keep Well Campaign, Carlow Mental Health Association, Healthy Carlow & Carlow Tourism.