

Pine Marten- Cat Crainn

Martes Martes, Linneaus

Indentification

The Pine Marten is one of Irelands most beautiful and distinctive animals. It belongs to the family Mustelidae, which also includes the otter, mink, stoat, and the badger. The Pine Marten is cat-like with a flatter more pointed head. It has long legs and its tail is long and fluffy. The tail is much fluffier than a red squirrels tail. The ears are large and rounded and are pale on the insides. The coat is a rich dark colour and looks almost black.

Diet

The Pine Marten is primarily a carnivore that preys on a wide variety of small animals and birds. It supplements its diet with fruit and invertebrates. While the Pine Marten is a very good climber, it hunts mainly on the ground. It preys on rodents such as wood mice and rats but also hunts rabbits, young hares, frogs, and roosting birds. Occasionally they eat squirrels.

Habitat

In Ireland, its main strongholds are deciduous woodland or scrub with good ground cover. It is also common to see them in areas of hazel scrub or limestone pavement of the Burren. Recently it has begun to colonise in mixed woodland and coniferous thickets.

Sainiithint

Tá an Cat Crainn ar cheann de na hainmhithe is áille agus is sainiúla in Éirinn. Is ball den Fhine Mustelidae é, ar fine í sin lena n-áirítear freisin an Dobharchú, an Mhinc, an Easóg agus an Broc. Tá an Cat Crainn cosúil le cat, ach tá ceann níos cothroime agus níos biorai air. Tá cosa fada air agus tá a earaball fada agus clúmhach. Tá an earaball i bhfad níos clúmhai ná eireaball an iora. Tá na cluasa mór agus cruinn agus meathbhán ar an taobh istigh. Tá dath saibhir an chóta chomh dorcha sin go bhfuil an chuma air go bhfuil sé dubh.

Cothú

Go príomha is feoilteoir é an Crann Cat agus déanann sé réimse leathan d'ainmhithe agus éin bheaga a chreachadh. Cuireann sé leis an gcothú sin le hainmhithe gan cnámha droma agus le torthaí. Cé go bhfuil an Cat Crainn ina dhreapadóir an-maith, is ar an talamh is mó a théann sé ag seilg. Déanann sé creimirí amhail luchóga féir agus francaigh a chreachadh, ach seilgeann sé coiníní, giorriacha óga, froganna, agus éin ar an bhfara freisin. Uaireanta itheann sé ioraí.

Gnáthóg

In Éirinn, is iad coilleamach dhuillsilteach nó latrach a bhfuil clúdach talún maith acu príomh-dhaingean an ainmhithe seo. Feictear é go minic i limistéir de latrach coill freisin nó ar phábháil aolchloiche sa Bhoirinn. Le déanaí thosaigh sé ar chóilíneacht a dhéanamh i gcoilleamach mheasctha agus i gcaschoillte buaircineacha

