

SPRING INTO SPRINGTIME!



OPW



Traditionally in Ireland, Springtime starts on the 1st February and lasts until the end of April. Other traditions consider March to be the start of Spring. Either way, Spring sees animals waking up with some coming out of hibernation, days start getting longer and warmer, plants start to grow and flower again and farmers begin to plant their crops for the new season. Countries in the Southern Hemisphere, like Peru, South Africa and New Zealand, celebrate Spring from September to November.

St. Brigid's day, has its origins in the Celtic festival of Imbolc, both were important festivals for our ancestors. These feast days, marked the end of Winter and the start of brighter days and new growth. People would ask Brigid for protection by hanging her crosses in their homes and in the animal sheds. They would celebrate with special meals such as potatoes with fresh butter and apple cakes. Groups of 'Biddy Boys', dressed in straw, would go from house to house, celebrating St. Brigid.



Between the months of March and September, due to the tilt of the earth's axis, the Northern Hemisphere is tilted more towards the sun. This increases the number of daylight hours, so countries like Ireland have longer and warmer days.

Fill in the gaps with the words below.....

CATKINS

CUBS

TADPOLES

SNOWDROPS

NESTS

GROUND

- ❖ Frogs lay frogspawn in ponds in Spring, which eventually turn into _____.
- ❖ _____ are one of the first flowers that start growing in February.
- ❖ Most fox _____ are born in March and stay with their parents for about 7 months.
- ❖ Hazel is one of the first native trees to flower in Spring, producing yellow _____.
- ❖ Hares live above _____, making a small depression in the long grass called a 'form'.
- ❖ Birds start building their _____ in Spring, to lay their eggs and raise their chicks.

Look for these plants and animals in the Castle Park!



SNOWDROP



DAFFODIL



ROBIN



BLACKBIRD



PRIMROSE



CROCUS



THRUSH



SQUIRREL

The four 'quarter days' for the Irish year marked the beginning of each new season: Imbolc (Spring) on 1st February; Bealtaine (Summer) on 1st May; Lúnasa (Harvest/Autumn) on 1st August and Samhain (Winter) on 1st November.