



Cork Urban Fossil Trail

Ireland's Fossil Heritage has created a series of urban fossil trails that guide you to fossils in the buildings, paving stones and walls in several towns and cities across Ireland.

The Cork urban fossil trail spans two areas: University College Cork and the city centre. You can walk the trail in each area separately or you can walk both in one day.

Leave No Trace

We encourage all visitors to the outdoors, including fossil sites, to follow the principles of the Leave No Trace campaign. We strongly discourage hammering and removal of fresh rock samples! Many fossil sites, including sites in Ireland, have been irrevocably impacted by irresponsible fossil collection, resulting in the destruction and loss of our natural heritage. Instead "Leave What You Find" – aim to minimise your mark on the natural environment and leave the fossils there for the next visitor to enjoy.

Find Out More

You can learn more about the fossils found on this trail and other Irish fossils on our website:

<https://www.ucc.ie/en/fossil-heritage/>

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University College Cork (UCC)



1. Gaol Cross

- Starting at the Gaol Cross entrance to UCC, explore the walls and pillars of the gateway. The light grey limestone has white brachiopod and crinoid fossils. The brachiopod fossils can be recognised as white circles or semicircles and the corals are characterised by a polka dot pattern. When you look at the “dots” closely you can see that they are circles with radial lines (like the spokes on a bicycle wheel).

2. West Lodge

- Walk through the Gaol Cross entrance to UCC and stop outside the Gate House (little cottage) on the left as you walk up the path to the Quad. In the paving stone of the step outside the West Lodge you will see a small, polished area of limestone containing a palm-sized goniatite fossil.

3. UCC Quad

- Walk up towards the arched entrance to the Quad and explore the walls of the building inside and out. The light grey limestone contains white brachiopods and

crinoids with some of the best examples found around the doors inside the west wing on the ground floor.

4. The Hub

- Exit the west wing of the Quad at the library (south) end and turn right towards the student Hub building. The light grey limestone of the student Hub contains white brachiopods and very common crinoid ossicles in places. Some of the best examples are in the stones around the windows of the building. Crinoid ossicles are small circular plates shaped like polo mints (10 mm across or less).



Goniatite outside the West Lodge

Brachiopods outside the
Glucksman Gallery



Gaol Cross entrance to UCC



Crinoids at the Honan Chapel



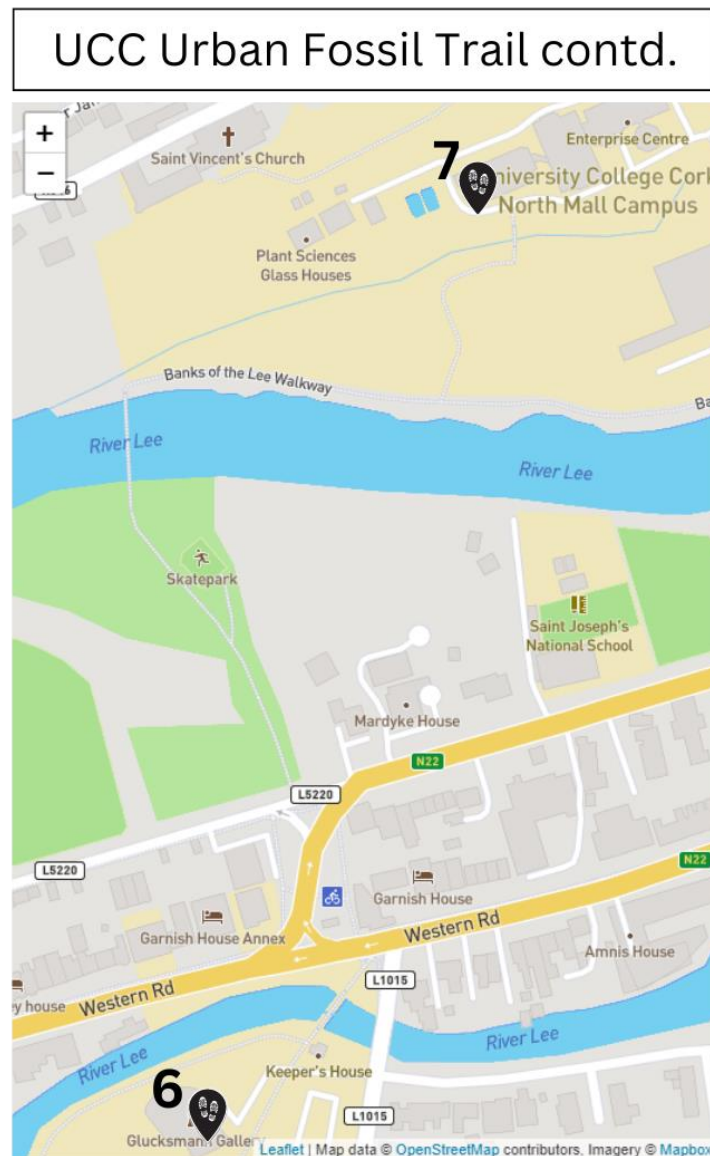
UCC Quad

5. Honan Chapel

- Turn back towards the Quad and walk by the library towards the student centre. In front of you is the Honan Chapel. Explore the building stones of the chapel and walls outside. The grey limestone here has abundant scattered crinoid ossicles and also lengths of conjoined ossicles – these are fragments of the crinoid stem. The ossicles here are larger than at the Hub and are more oval in shape.

6. Glucksman Gallery

- Walk west around the student centre and turn right, continuing along the path and down the steps towards the main UCC entrance. Stop outside the Glucksman Gallery. The paving stones and walls outside the gallery are made of grey limestone which with very common white coral and brachiopod fossils.



7. UCC Geology Garden

- Exit the main UCC campus gates, cross Western road and Mardyke walk continuing towards the skate park. Cross the bridge onto the Banks of the Lee Walkway. Take the first left and continue towards the Butler Building. The UCC Geology Garden is located at the front of the building to your left as you approach. Specimen number 9 in the garden is a large slab of Liscannor Flagstone. The dark grey sandstones show striking curved lines - these are fossil burrows called *Olivellites*

This is the end of the UCC urban fossil trail. If you would like to continue the Cork urban fossil trail continue walking by the UCC buildings until you reach the exit on North Mall. Continue walking for approximately 8 minutes along North Mall and then onto Popes Quay until you reach St Mary's Church. This is the first stop for the Cork Urban Fossil Trail (details below).

Cork City Centre



1. St Mary's Church

- Go up the steps towards the entrance to the church and examine the paving stones here. The dark grey sandstones show striking curved lines - these are fossil burrows called *Olivellites*.

2. Gate Cinema Cork

- From St Mary's Church walk west along Pope's Quay until you reach Shandon Footbridge. Cross the bridge onto Kyril's Quay and walk for 2 minutes until you see the Gate Cinema. Explore the building stones of the Gate Cinema, here you

will find ammonite, belemnite and bivalve fossils. The building stone here is not Irish in origin, it is Portland Limestone from England and is Jurassic in age.

3. North Main Street

- Walk down North Main Street from the cinema and explore the paving stones that line the footpaths and gutters along North Main Street and Paul Street. Within this dark grey limestone there are white brachiopod and colonial coral fossils. The brachiopod fossils can be recognised as white circles or semicircles and the corals are characterised by a polka dot pattern. When you look at the “dots” closely you can see that they are circles with radial lines (like the spokes on a bicycle wheel).

4. Cornmarket Shopping Centre

- From North Main Street walk through Castle Street. Turn left onto Cornmarket Street (Coal Quay) and enter the Cornmarket Shopping Centre. Explore the paving stones throughout the shopping mall. The yellow and red limestones here have incredible ammonite and belemnite fossils, with some brachiopods in the dark grey/black limestone paving stones also. The red and yellow paving stones are not of Irish origin.

5. St Patrick’s Bridge

- Exit Cornmarket Shopping Centre onto Cornmarket Street and turn right towards the river. Walk along Lavitt’s Quay until you reach St. Patrick’s Bridge. The paving stones on the bridge and the actual bridge itself is made of grey limestone with white corals and brachiopods.

6. Easons/Old Victoria Hotel

- Cross Lavitt’s Quay/Merchant’s Quay onto St. Patrick’s Street. Walk until you reach Eason’s (on the left side of the street as you walk from the bridge). The shopfront is made of a dark grey/black limestone with white brachiopod and large colonial coral fossils. These are very striking and can be easily seen above and below the windows on all sides of the shop.

7. Old Bank Building South Mall

- Walk down the side of Eason’s along Cook Street. Cross Oliver Plunkett Street and continue to South Mall, then turn left and continue towards Parnell Place. Stop at the corner of South Mall and Parnell Place and explore the old bank building here. The light grey limestone has abundant crinoid ossicles and long stem sections that are a similar colour to the building stones.

8. City Hall

- From South Mall cross Parnell Bridge and continue to City Hall. The building stones of the walls around the City Hall are made of grey limestone which contain white brachiopod fossils.

9. Garda Station

- Continue walking down Anglesea Street by the Fire Station to the Garda Station. The walls around the main doorway to the Garda Station are a grey limestone which contains abundant (white) coral and brachiopod fossils.

10. Holy Trinity Church

- From the Garda Station, cross Anglesea Street onto Copley Street and then cross Trinity Bridge (in front of the College of Commerce) onto Father Matthew Quay and continue to Holy Trinity Church. The building stones of the church are a grey limestone which contain white brachiopod fossils.



Fossils on the facade of the Easons building

Corals and Brachiopods outside Easons



Ammonite in Cornmarket Shopping Centre



Corals on North Main Street



Brachiopods on the Garda Station