



Kilkenny 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 Kilkenny urban fossil trail starts at St. John's Church on John Street and finishes at St Canice's Cathedral and Round Tower.

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:

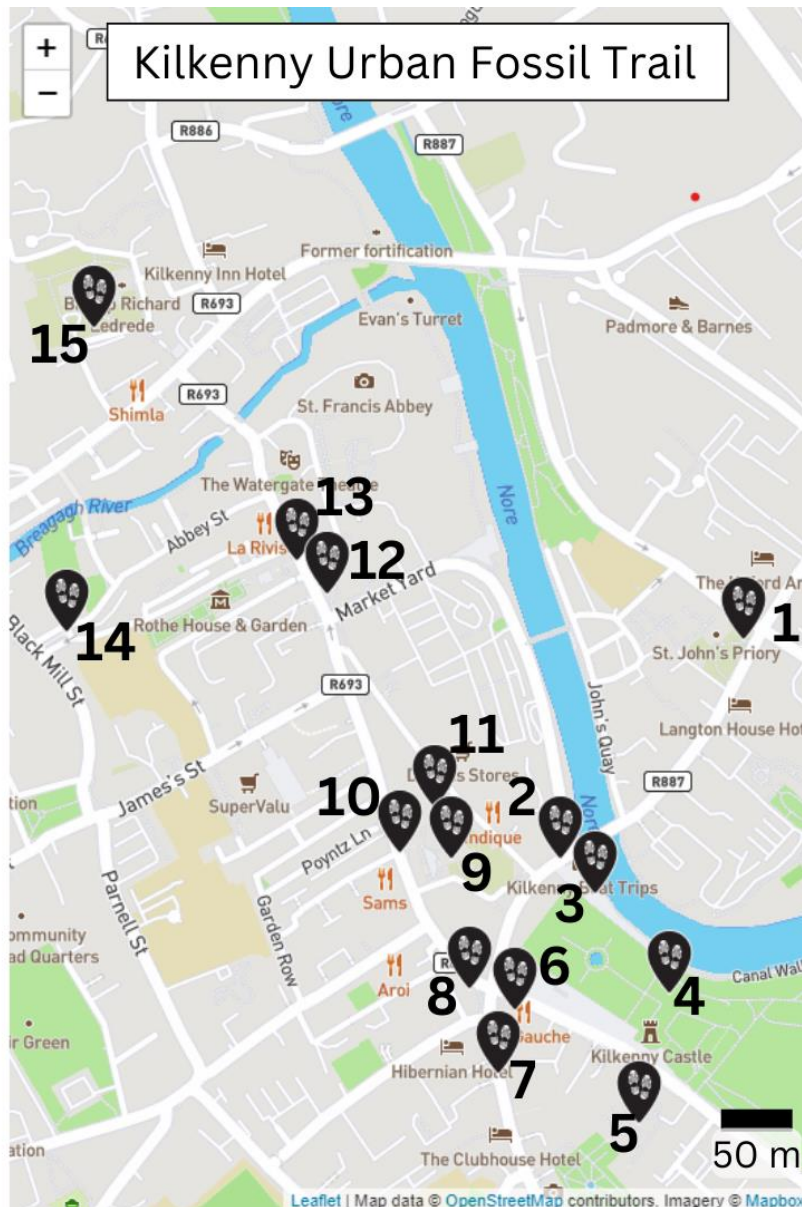
<https://www.ucc.ie/en/fossil-heritage/>

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1. St John's Church of Ireland

- Starting on John Street Lower explore the building stones of St. John's Church. Here you will find white brachiopods and corals. The best fossils found are seen in the stones surrounding the windows. 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. Rose Inn Street

- Walk down John Street and cross St John's Bridge. Look down at the gutter stones along Rose Inn Street. The dark grey limestone paving stones contain white brachiopods and large colonial corals. These paving stones and fossils can be seen all around Kilkenny city centre.

3. Canal Square

- From Rose Inn Street enter Canal Square and walk towards the old building by the river. The building stones contain brachiopods and coral fossils.

4. Kilkenny Castle

- Walk back to Rose Inn Street and walk along until you reach the Parade, turn left and continue towards the castle. There are lots of fossils to find around the castle. The building stones of the castle itself are made of grey limestone that contains white brachiopod and coral fossils, both solitary and colonial corals can be seen. Some building stones are full of fossils while some only have a few, you can also see distinct horizons of fossil rich and fossil poor limestone in some individual stones.
- The darker grey paving stones of the steps at the NW corner of the castle on the river side contain striking curved lines - these are fossil burrows called Olivellites.



Brachiopods in the
AIB Bank Building



Brachiopods at the Thosel



Colonial Coral at the
National Design and Craft Gallery



Colonial Coral at Left Bank



Gastropod on the Castle



Coral and brachiopod fossils
at St Canices Cathedral

5. National Design and Craft

- Exit the castle grounds onto the Parade, cross the road to the National Design and Craft Centre. The building stones of the centre have brachiopod and bright white colonial coral fossils within them.

6. Left Bank

- From here head back down the Parade towards the city centre, stop at the Left Bank building on the corner of the Parade, Rose Inn Street and Patrick Street. The building stones here have beautiful brachiopod and coral fossils.

7. Guest House steps

- Turn onto Patrick Street and explore the steps of the Guest House about 50 m along the street on the left-hand side, for brachiopod fossils.

8. AIB Bank Kilkenny

- Turn around and walk back down Patrick Street and onto High Street. The AIB building on your right-hand side here contains brachiopod fossils in its façade.

9. Medieval Mile Museum

- Keep walking along High Street until you reach Mary Street on the left side of the street, from here explore the building and paving stones of the Medieval Museum, you will find brachiopod and coral fossils.

10. The Thosel

- Exit Mary Street back onto High Street and turn right towards the Thosel. The pillars at the Thosel contain brachiopods, the base of the pillars in particular are densely packed with fossils.

11. Butter Slip Lane

- Just beyond the Thosel turn right onto Butterslip Lane. The paving stones here are seen all around Kilkenny city centre and contain brachiopod fossils.

12. Old Jail and Courthouse

- Walking back onto High Street turn right and continue north onto Parliament Street until you reach the Old Jail and Courthouse building on your right. The building stones and the pillars here and also at the Smithwicks experience building next door contain brachiopods and corals.

13. Rothe House

- Cross Parliament Street to Rothe House. The building stones around the entrance and alley to Rothe House and Gardens contain brachiopod and coral fossils.

14. Black Abbey

- Continue along Parliament Street for about 60 m and then turn left onto Abbey Street. Explore the building and pillar stones around the church for brachiopods and corals.

15. St Canice's Cathedral and Round Tower

- Head back down Abbey Street and turn left onto Parliament Street, continuing onto Irishtown and further to St. Canice's Place. Ahead of you, you will see St Canice's Cathedral and Round Tower the building stones and pillars around the church and tower contain brachiopod and coral fossils.