

# Castlecoote Loop

## A FAMILY FRIENDLY WALK

The Castlecoote Loop (Ladybug Way) is a 5.2 km. family friendly walk on the tranquil Suck Valley Way. The Loop starts and finishes by the River Suck (at the old Telephone Box / Information Kiosk) in the picturesque village of Castlecoote.

## THE PERFECT "LOOP" FOR WATER LOVERS

The Castlecoote Loop is unique as the walker encounters water at five different points along the way. The loop starts at the River Suck in Castlecoote village. It passes by Stoneham's Lake (An Linn Bhán) with its ancient crannóg\* and Donamon Castle in the background. It then traverses the Derryhippo River over a beautiful Steel bridge into the Coillte Wood, Bracklin. As the walk loops back towards Castlecoote, it passes over Black's Bridge where the Derryhippo River can be seen entering Black's Lake (Lough Na Saggart). The walker then passes another small lake which the Derryhippo flows into during Winter floods. The loop finishes in the Tidy Towns village of Castlecoote. The Loop traverses country road, farm land and forest, rich in biodiversity with a great variety of flora and fauna along the way.

## THE "BIG 5"

At Black's Bridge, look out for "The Big 5" on the Derryhippo River (a tributary of the River Suck). The River Suck and its adjacent areas of seasonally flooded wet callow grassland is designated a Special Protection Area for five important wintering bird species, the Whooper Swan, Greenland White-fronted Goose, Wigeon, Golden Plover and Lapwing. Of particular note is that three of the species that occur regularly – Whooper Swan, Greenland White-fronted Goose and Golden Plover, are listed on Annex I of the E.U. Birds Directive. Keep an eye out for huge flocks of Golden Plover which wheel about in large flocks with the light catching their pale undersides as they turn. Spot the Greenland White-fronted Geese which travel from their breeding ground in Greenland. Other interesting birds on the Loop include Mute Swan, Teal, Mallard, Black-tailed Godwit, Curlew and Black-headed Gull.

## LADYBUG WAY

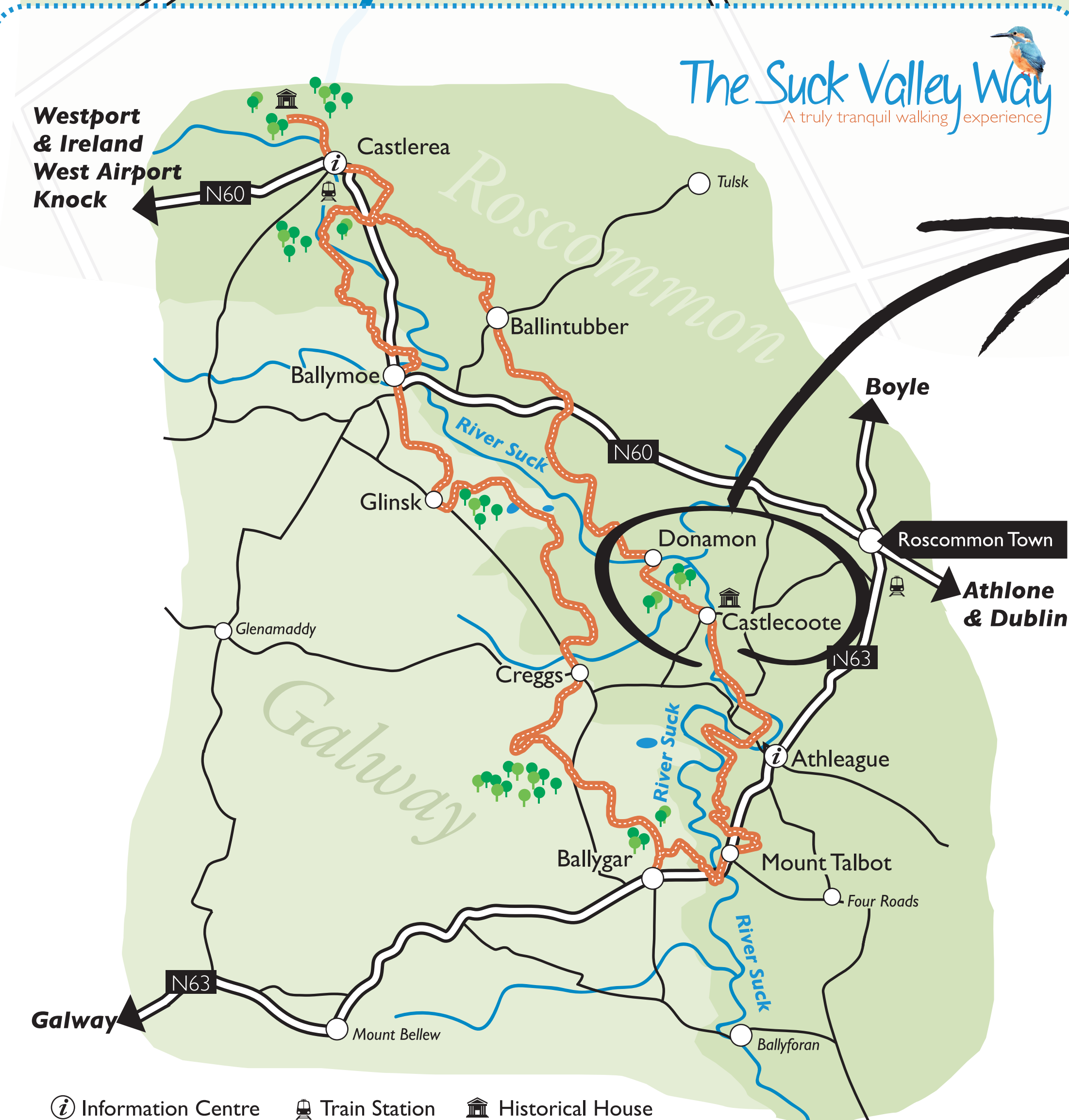
Another special feature of the Castlecoote Loop are the bespoke, colourful stone ladybugs that can be found at different points on the walk – these are of great interest to younger walkers! There are ladybugs of every colour and size along the way and some slate fairy doors in the forest if you have eyes that can see them.

## RELAX

Relax with a coffee or ice-cream at the picnic benches beside Castlecoote Stores after your walk while watching out for the Kingfisher as it flashes through the beautiful seven arched bridge.

\*The crannóg on Stoneham's lake (An Linn Bhán) is well preserved. When water levels are low, careful observation can reveal 16 ancient oak-beams radiating like spokes of a wheel from the centre of the man-made island. The remains of a palisade of upright oak poles may also be seen. Crannógs are man-made islands created in Ireland and Scotland between the Bronze-age and medieval times. It is thought that they were built for defensive purposes.

Follow the Ladybug Way!



For more information visit [www.discoversuckvalley.ie](http://www.discoversuckvalley.ie)

To Ballygar

## TRAIL INFORMATION

Distance: **5.2km**, Total Height Gain: **47m**  
Estimated Completion Time: **1 hour**

Difficulty Rating: **Moderate** (some climbs, uneven surfaces & obstacles. Suitable for people with a moderate level of fitness & some walking experience).

Waymarking: **Orange Arrows & Castlecoote Loop Symbol on Black Posts.**



**No dogs permitted on the Castlecoote Loop or the Suck Valley Way. Dogs pose a danger to livestock & dogowners as a result.**



In case of emergency, call **999** or **112**

\*Route subject to flooding

For local tourist information visit [www.roscommon.ie](http://www.roscommon.ie)

## THE SUCK VALLEY WAY

Castlecoote Loop forms part of the long-distance national way-marked walking trail, the Suck Valley Way, passing through Counties Roscommon and Galway and the 'Nine Friendly Villages' of Ballygar, Creggs, Glinsk, Ballymoe, Ballintober, Donamon, Castlecoote, Athleague, Mount Talbot and Castlerea town. The landscape en-route features river banks and lakes, bogs, callows, woodland, gentle hills and meadows and makes for wonderful and varied low-land walking.

The Suck Valley boasts a wealth of history and heritage with many ring forts, castles and ancient churches along its banks. Of particular interest are the unique La Tène Stone at Castlestrange, an ovoid boulder of granite richly carved and dating from the Iron Age, and Donamon Castle, one of the oldest inhabited buildings in Ireland with a recorded history going back to 1154. The river and surrounding landscapes are rich in biodiversity - native Irish wildlife such as deer, hare and red squirrel can be spotted as you walk.

## SLÍ GHLEANN NA SUCA

*Lúb Baile Mhic Oireachtaigh mar chuid den chonair shíúil shlimharcaíte náisiúnta fad-achair, Slí Ghleann an tSuca, a théann trí Chontae Ros Comáin agus Chontae na Gaillimhe agus na 'Naoi Sráidbhailte Cairdiúla' - Béal Átha Ghártha, Na Creaoga, Glinsce, Béal Átha Mó, Baile an Tobair, Dún Iomáin, Baile Mhic Oireachtaigh, Áth Liag, Mun Talbóid agus Caisleán Riabhach. Cuimsíonn an tírdhreach feadh an bhealaigh bruaicha abhann agus lochana, portaigh, calaí, coillearnacha, cnoic agus móineir, rud a chinntíonn gur siúlóid íseal-chrioch iontach agus éagsúil í seo.*

*Tá go leor staire agus oidhreacht ag baint le Gleann na Suca lena n-áirítear ráthanna, caisleáin agus séipéil ársa. Ar na cinn is uathúla tá Cloch La Tène ag Caisleán Stráinse, ballán ubhchruthach eibhir ón iarnnais atá snoite go galánta, agus Caisleán Dhún Iomáin, ceann de na foirgnimh is sine a bhfuil daoine ina gcónaí ann in Éirinn agus téann a chuid taifead staire siar chomh fada le 1154. Tá an abhainn agus na tírdhreacha máguaird saibhir ó thaobh na bithéagsúlachta de – is féidir fadhúlra dúchasach na hÉireann ar nós fianna, giorriacha agus ioraí rua a fheiceáil agus tú ag siúl.*

Relax by the river Suck



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1. Plan Ahead and Prepare
2. Be Considerate of Others
3. Respect Farm Animals and Wildlife
4. Leave What You Find
5. Dispose of Waste Properly

For more information, visit  
[www.leaveonotraceireland.org](http://www.leaveonotraceireland.org)

**Notice:** Some of the property traversed by the Castlecoote Loop is private property. Access is available by kind permission of all the landowners on the route. It is understood that persons entering do so by permission with the consent of the landowner and no matter how often they enter, or in what numbers, they do not do so as of right. No amount of expenditure by the partners to this agreement or by private individuals on the route being used will alter this position. As further evidence of the permissive nature of the access, the route will be closed on the **31st of January** each year in agreement with the landowners. Nothing in this notice shall impinge or address any pre-existing public rights of way.