



Ask about Ireland



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Pine Marten



Latin: *Martes martes*
Irish: *Cat crainn*

Size: From the nose to the tip of the tail, a pine marten measures about 60-65cm.

Months seen: All year

Habitat: *Cat crainn*, or 'tree-cat', the Irish name for pine marten describes it well as its natural habitat is woodland areas. This shy mammal is found mostly in the west and south of Ireland.

Food: Pine martens hunt mostly by night, eating worms, birds, frogs, small mammals, and birds' eggs, as well as forest fruits.

Features: Pine martens are amongst Ireland's shyest, and rarest, animal. They are similar in appearance to stoats, but have a longer body, shorter legs, and a much bushier tail. They have a rich chestnut brown coat, with a creamy throat and underside.

To help them climb trees to catch their prey, pine martens have extremely strong claws. While they are very shy, they will defend themselves fiercely if threatened by another animal.

The mating season occurs from September to October, and the young are born from March to April. Most litters are three animals, and there is usually one litter per year.

Pine martens can live for up to 17 years.

