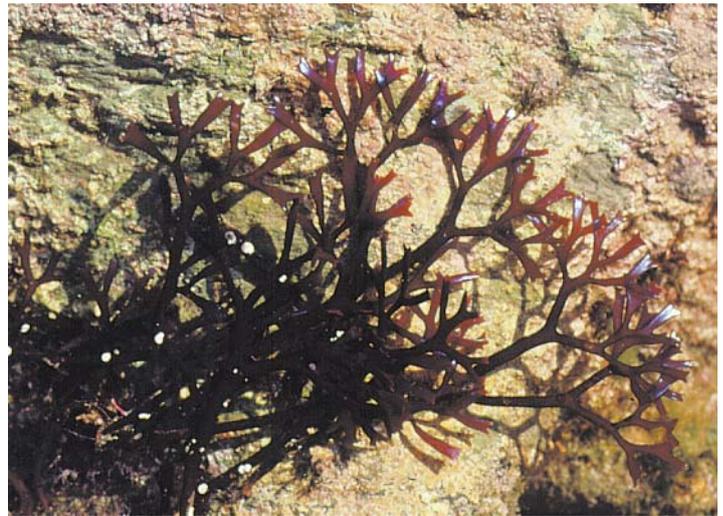


Carrageen Moss



Carrageen Moss

Scientific Name: *Chondrus crispus*
Irish Name: Cosáinín (carrage)

There are three main groups of seaweeds: red, green and brown. Carrageen Moss is one of the red seaweeds. This is a small, bushy seaweed with flat fronds that regularly divide to form a fan shape. 'Frond' is the word used to describe the leaf-like parts of a seaweed.

One of the most beautiful features of Carrageen Moss is its colour. Under water, the tips of the fronds may have a purple/blue shine, known as iridescence. It is common all around the coast of Ireland.

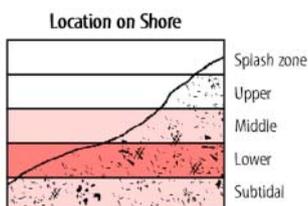
The similar red seaweed, *Mastocarpus stellatus* has slightly rolled edges to its fronds and a warty surface on older parts. It is also collected as Irish Moss.



Images by Terry Farnell / Sherkin Island Marine

Mastocarpus stellatus

Where can you find Carrageen Moss?



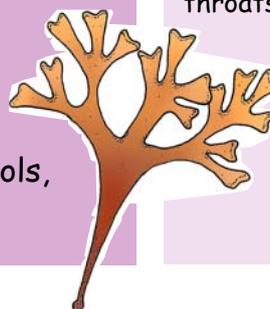
Carrageen Moss is usually found growing underneath the larger brown seaweeds in rockpools, or on rocks on the lower shore. It does not like being out of water for any length of time.

FACT FILE:

Colour: Dark red-purple.

Size: From 7-15 cm long.

Habitat: Grows on rocks and stones in pools, on the lower shore and in shallow water.



Carrageen Moss in Food & Health

Carrageen, or Irish Moss as it is also known, is often dried and used as a food or used as a thickening agent in cooking. It contains carrageenan, which

has setting properties and is also good for combining two liquids into a smooth mixture. Along with other seaweeds with similar properties, it is a very important additive in the food

industry for making such things as soups and jellies. It is also found in toothpastes, creams and lotion. In many Irish homes, Carrageen Moss pudding is a typical milk-based dessert.

Carrageen is also used in medicines and has been used in Ireland for centuries as a treatment for colds, coughs and sore throats.

When Carrageen is harvested for eating, it is washed and dried in the sun to preserve it, where it turns yellowish and translucent and becomes brittle.

