

# IAN MCGRIGOR

## GORTBRACK ORGANIC FARM, TRALEE, KERRY



### THE STORY

Meet Ian, an organic grower, eco landscaper, and an encyclopaedia on pretty much anything you need to know about growing for nature.

Gortbrack Organic Farm is a place which reminds us how abundant and alive nature can be. The driveway is canopied with huge broadleaf trees, dense hedgerows and untamed undergrowth. It fools you into thinking you've somehow slipped into a scene from Jurassic Park, a time before humans, when the wild was... *wild*.

The farm is on a north-facing bog, cut with the harsh sea air and rooted on acidic soil. It's fair to say these are more than just unfavourable conditions.

**"We were told the only thing we could plant was spruce because nothing else would survive. So we planted everything BUT spruce, and none of it died."**

Ian and his wife Eileen have defied the odds and created a Garden of Eden that says: if you can do it here, you can do it anywhere. Their polytunnels and vegetable garden pulsate with life—it's as if the whole place has been pumped full of steroids. The donkeys have broken free from Eeyore's anhedonic stereotype, the ducks seem to be smiling, and the bees are so drunk on nectar you can almost pet them.

Ian has naturally gravitated towards education and is now a mentor, teaching schools,

businesses, and community groups how to:

**"Create habitats and watch the wildlife come."**

### THE CHALLENGE

"Observe what you have, add as many diverse habitats into that space, and watch the wildlife come. There are 15 different species that just live on a hawthorn, and an oak tree isn't simply a tree, it's a city - a community of thousands of species."

### THE WHY

"I've always been frustrated with the behaviour of the human race and I've been looking for life-giving solutions. I think this is a lifetime of therapy, just trying to stay sane in a mad world."

### THE HOPE

"I am hoping for the paradigm shift which I read about in the 70s. The concept is that around this time, the level of change and confusion is going to be such that we either crack up or we fundamentally change our mindset to one that respects the planet. I haven't seen it yet but people are talking about it, and that gives me hope."

### THE RECOMMENDATION

BOOK - *The One-Straw Revolution: An Introduction to Natural Farming* by Masanobu Fukuoka.

To find out more about the farm or to book a stay visit [gortbrackorganicfarm.com](http://gortbrackorganicfarm.com) or follow Ian on Facebook at @Gortb



**Biodiversity is our wealth, it's not an add on.**

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