

The display case by Tina Whelan celebrates and showcases some aspects of Ellen Hutchins's algae drawings and specimens, all of which she collected in the Bantry Bay area and which led to her significant contribution to scientific understanding.

It features the cast hands of Jessica Hamilton, a botanist from Kerry, who stands in Ellen's place and is of a similar age to Ellen when she died at 29.

Right Hand

Jessica herself discovered 'new to Ireland'-The Bordered Tortoise Beetle (*Cassida vittata*), this small (c5mm) beetle, was discovered in an area of salt-marsh habitat in August 2023 near Balyheigue, Co. Kerry. Its magnified image is printed on the right hand wrist.

Ellen Hutchins contributed premium specimens and drawings to Lewis Weston Dillwyn's algal research, helping him to further understand many species. The upper right hand features Ellen's drawing of *Conferva brodiei*/ *Hutchinsia Brodii*/ *Polysiphonia brodiaea*.* This drawing featured in Dillwyn's landmark 1809 botanical work, *British Confervae*.

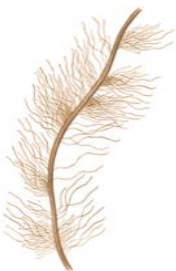


Left Hand

The left-hand's wrist features a magnified drawing of *Fucus tomentosus*/ *Codium tomentosum* by Ellen, or rather part of its frond in fruit. She was the first to collect specimens of and draw this alga with fructification. The drawing has pride of place as the first entry in vol 3 of Dawson Turner's major work, *Historia Fucorum* in 1819.



The upper left hand bears her detailed drawing of *Litosiphon pusillus*/ *laminariae*.



There are some live specimens of these algae in the case alongside some other algae which are abundant in Bantry Bay today, can you spot them?

*Many algae have been ‘re-arranged’ and had their names changed over the years as botanists’ understanding of them has grown. The names given here start with the one that Ellen knew and end with the current name.

All of the images of Ellen Hutchins’s drawings are courtesy of the Library and Archives, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.

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Thanks to Laura Briscoe, Assistant Curator of the Cryptogamic Herbarium, New York Botanical Garden for information on the algae.

The installation is part of the Ellen Hutchins Festival 2026.

More information about Tina’s work is available at: tinawhelanartist.ie
& <https://www.instagram.com/tinawhelanart/>

