

# Animal Transformations

Visual art activities inspired by  
shapeshifters from Irish mythology



By **Duffy Mooney-Sheppard**

for ages 5-12

as part of

**The Beautiful Beasts @ Home**

online at [ark.ie](http://ark.ie)

This activity sheet includes some simple fun visual art ideas to spark your imagination and help you get creative at home.

## The Kingdom of Wolves

All over Ireland there are stories of humans turning into animals. Where you now see Co. Kilkenny and Co. Laois on the map, there was once an ancient kingdom called Ossory. This was The Kingdom of Wolf People! They could turn from human into wolves whenever they liked.

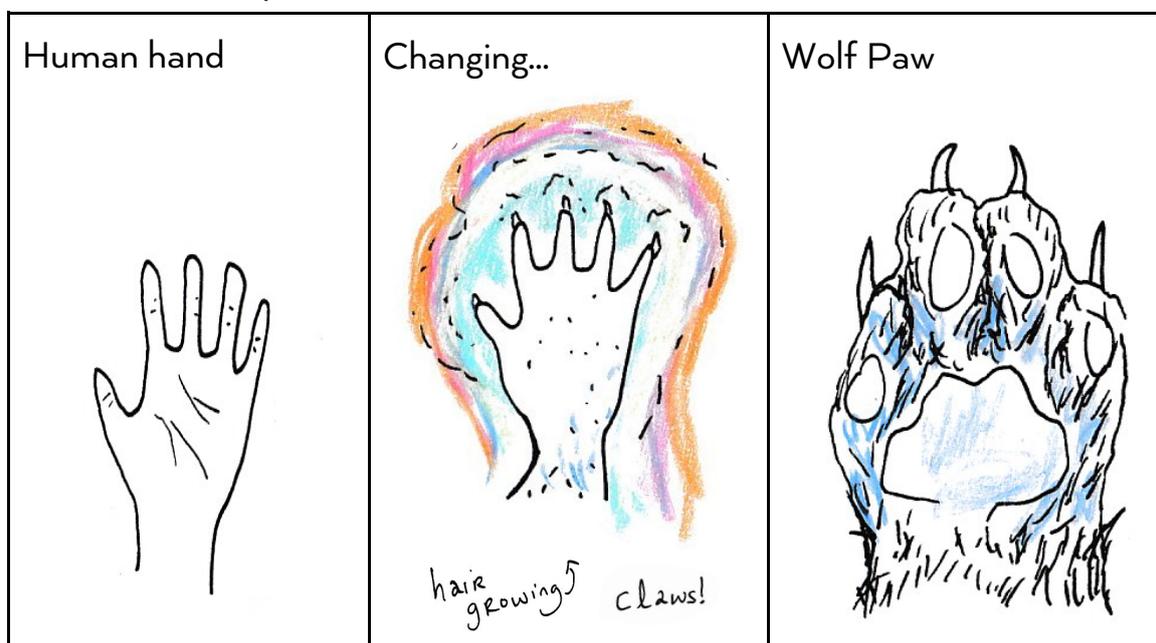


Kingdom of Ossory

Imagine you are changing into a wolf...

What would happen to your body? How would your face change? Your feet and hands?

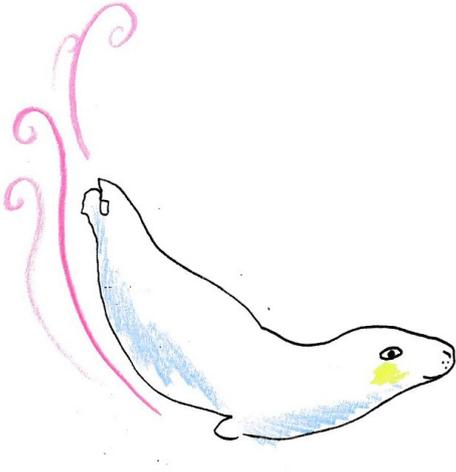
Can you show in three drawings the changes that might happen to you as you change into a wolf? Here is an example...



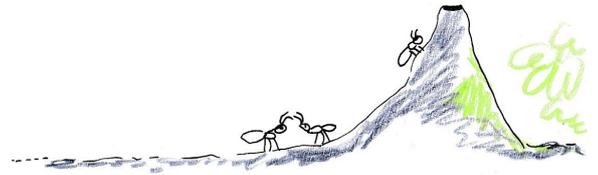
## Let's Go Wild!

When the wolf people of Ossory transformed into wolves, they would go “wolfing” (acting like wild wolves as they ran through the woods and howling at the moon!)

If you turned into a seal, you could go “sealing”, or if you transformed into a bear you might go “bearing” or how about an ant “anting”?



Choose an animal and draw pictures to show where you would go, how you would act and what you would do?



## The Children of Lir: Write your Swan Song

Long ago, four children were transformed into swans. They were greatly loved by their father but their step-mother was jealous and cruel and she used a magic spell to curse them. They lived as swans for 900 years until finally the spell was broken and they were free!

Amazingly, while they were swans, they could sing with human voices.

If you were a swan-child, what song would you sing?

Maybe you would sing the story of what happened to you?

You might tell what life is like as a swan? Or sing words of advice and wisdom?

Draw yourself as a swan and write the song you would sing.



We'd love to see your drawings and hear what types of animal creatures you'd like to become. If you'd like to tell us what you thought or share photos of your artwork with us, grown-ups can email them to us at [thearkdublin@gmail.com](mailto:thearkdublin@gmail.com).

For even more fun with **Animal Transformations**, check out our book-making video workshop with Duffy Mooney-Sheppard, in partnership with Irish Arts Center at [ark.ie](http://ark.ie).

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*The Beautiful Beasts @ Home* is part of The Ark's 25th birthday season, sponsored by BDO.



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