

Bruce Castle - Tree ID Sheet

This is a simple fact sheet to be used with children, by adults and teachers.

The use of Latin names

We still use Latin names today as they are understood by gardeners throughout the world. They are also descriptive and can help to identify different trees. If you look at the Latin names below they provide clues to the colour, shape, smell, or place of origin of each tree.

1. Corkscrew Willow - *Salix matsudana 'Tortuosa'*

From Japan, these trees are named after their corkscrew-like branches. They are often described as ornamental but attract little wildlife.



3. Yew - *Taxus baccata*

An evergreen conifer, it keeps its needle-like leaves throughout the year. It is often used as a home by birds, such as starlings. Yews are a symbol of immortality, and you often find them in churchyards. They can live for over 1000 years, their trunks growing on average 1cm a year.



5. Copper Beech - *Fagus sylvatica 'Purpurea'*

Beeches have a short life compared to most trees only living 250 years. They create a lot of shade and little will grow underneath a beech tree. Beeches are closely related to Oaks and Horse Chestnuts and the timber is very good for furniture.



6. Sycamore - *Acer pseudoplatanus*

Part of the maple family. It is not native to Britain but very hardy and has firmly established itself in this country. It is the only common tree that has flowers pollinated by insects and is a vital source of nectar to bees. During the autumn, these flowers turn into winged seeds. When the seeds are ripe they rotate like helicopters away from the tree.



2. Cedar of Lebanon - *Cedrus libani*

Evergreen tree brought to Britain in the 17th century from the Mediterranean and northern India. On their branches they produce big barrel-shaped cones, up to 15cm long. These take two years to ripen.



4. Silver Birch - *Betula pendula*

Easy to recognise from its white papery bark, older trees look more silvery. Its scientific name of pendula means hanging, named after its 'droopy' branches. It is also sometimes known as the Warty Birch because its twigs bear tiny warts. In the spring the birch produces catkins (the fluffy pieces that hang from the branches) and relies on the wind to pollinate itself.



7. London Plane - *Platanus x hispanica*

Despite the name this tree is not native to Britain. It is a cross between the American Plane and the European Oriental Plane. Often planted along streets, this tree has attractive flaky bark and bobble-like fruit. These fruits stay on the tree all through winter.



8. Horse Chestnut - *Aesculus hippocastanum*

From Greece, introduced to Britain in the late 16th century. In the spring the tree has white or red flowers on display. In autumn it has seeds called conkers.



9. Oak - *Quercus robur*

Native to this country, oaks can grow up to 40m high. Their leaves are easy to spot from their lobed shape. Oaks also have distinctive seeds called acorns. These are only produced after 20 years. An oak tree aged 70 or 80 years old will produce thousands of acorns, and a mature oak tree can drink around 225 litres of water per day. This great oak is the oldest tree in Haringey. It is believed to be almost 500 years old.



10. Indian Bean Tree - *Catalpa bignonioides*

The name 'Indian' refers to the North American native Indians. The trees first came to Britain in 1726. In late spring, large tough leaves appear up to 25cm long and 15cm wide. Indian beans have frilly white, yellow and purplish-brown summer flowers, which are so heavy they pull the side branches down to the ground. Its name comes from the long green bean pods that can be spotted in summer.



Answers to Tree Trail

Q1 Birds, squirrels and many insects use trees for food and shelter. Trees are also a good place to hide from predators

Q2 The prickles protect the conkers and beech nuts whilst they're growing. Only when they're ripe and ready does this layer burst open.

Q3 The very large oak in the middle of the park is nearly 500 years old. Oaks in Britain can survive more than a 1000 years!

Q4 Many trees are deciduous, this means they lose their leaves in the autumn. Trees shed their leaves to prevent water loss in the winter months. As the leaves gradually die on the branches they turn many colours from gold, red to brown.

Q5 Roots grow deep underground and soak up water and nutrients from the soil. The roots spread out like an umbrella and help keep the tree standing upright.

Q6 The floor is made of wood. Using dendrochronology (tree ring dating) we know it is from the 18th century and was made using local trees.