

BRITISH NATIVE TREE TRAIL

GEDLING COUNTRY PARK & NATURE RESERVE



TREE GUIDE

DETAILED GUIDE TO EACH TREE SPECIES, LISTED ALPHABETICALLY

20 & 73. ALDER — *Alnus glutinosa*

Grows to 20m with dark bark often covered in lichen. Dark green racket shaped leaves are 3 to 9cm long with serrated edges. The dangling male catkins appear in spring. Female catkins grow as small green knots in summer, drying and turning black before the tiny fruits fall out. Seeds are eaten by siskins and greenfinches and some moths live on alders. The wood can be used for plywood.

9. ALDER BUCKTHORN — *Frangula alnus*

Grows to over 6m with dark brown bark. Branches are smooth and thornless, leaves are 3-7cm long, matt green and slightly hairy. Greenish white, star shaped flowers contain male and female parts and appear in clusters during May and June. The leaves are the favourite food of the brimstone butterfly. Birds like the berries that develop later in the year. Various parts of the tree are used to make dyes.

43. ALMOND WILLOW — *Salix triandra*

A small bushy alluvial willow growing rapidly at first but seldom reaching more than 10m. Smooth, flaking, brown bark, lanceolate, toothed, hairless, dark, shiny-green leaves. Large catkins useful as a pollen/nectar source. Locally common in the UK widely used in the Trent Valley willow industry. It is only identifiable as basketmakers' cultivars and its natural status may be questionable. A particularly attractive and fragrant species - the twigs have a faint rose-water flavour when chewed.

24 & 75. ASH — *Fraxinus excelsior*

Grows to 35m with a pale grey-brown bark. Leaves have 3-6 pairs of pale green, oval leaflets grow in what is called a pinnate compound leaf. Male and female flowers often grow on different trees in purple, spiked clusters which appear before the leaves. The female flowers are wind pollinated and form 'keys' which drop over winter and spring. Bullfinches eat the seeds, woodpeckers and owls like to nest in the trees. The leaves are food to many varieties of moth. A very tough wood, with shock absorbing qualities, it is used as handles on tools like axes and for furniture.

50. ASPEN — *Populus tremula*

Grows to 25m with shimmering foliage. The grey bark can be very dark and covered in lichens. The leaves start out coppery before turning green and flattened, flexible leaf stalks allow them to flutter in the breeze. Catkins grow in March and April with male and female on different trees. Female catkins ripen to produce fluffy seeds. Aspen trees attract a wide variety of insects. The wood's low flammability is good for making matches and its lightness is used for oars and paddles.

8. BASKET WILLOW — *Salix viminalis*

Grows to 7m with greyish-brown bark and yellow-green twigs. Glossy, dark green leaves are 20cm long and 4cm wide. Underneath they are covered in felt-like grey hairs. Male yellow and female green catkins develop on different plants and arrive in late winter before the leaves. After pollination, the female catkins split to release tiny seeds. Moth caterpillars feed on the leaves and the catkins provide pollen to bees and other insects. This willow is great for basket weaving, screens,

and sculptures. It is also able to absorb heavy metals so is often used to help clean up industrial sites.

16 & 57. BAY WILLOW — *Salix pentandra*

Grows to 18m and the dark grey bark has criss-cross ridges. It is named for its leaves similarity to the bay tree. Dark green and glossy the leaves are approx. 5-12cm long with finely serrated edges. Yellow, male catkins and green female catkins grow on different trees and emerge after the leaves, in late spring. Female catkins develop into a fruit capsule containing tiny, fluffy seeds that are dispersed by the wind. Several caterpillars of moths eat the leaves and the catkin pollen is an early source of protein for bees and other insects. Salicin is a compound found in the bark of willows and has long been used as a pain killer, Aspirin is derived from salicin.

40. BEECH — *Fagus sylvatica*

Grows to over 30m but has shallow roots so can be blown over. Fruits develop as beech nuts called mast and are contained in a prickly case. Beech leaves are eaten by caterpillars and the mast is enjoyed by mice, voles, squirrels and birds. Beech wood is hard and used for parquet floors and furniture.

29 & 52. BIRD CHERRY — *Prunus padus*

Also known as black dogwood and hogberry it grows to 25m. The bark is smooth, peeling and grey brown. The green leaves are oval and hairless with fine sharp, serrated edges. Clusters of white, heavily scented flowers appear

in April. They contain male and female parts and after pollination develop into red-black bitter cherries. The nectar is great for bees and the cherries are eaten by birds, badgers and mice. Caterpillars eat the leaves but they're toxic to livestock. Fruits and bark have been used to make dyes and the wood is light and good for making small items. The cherries were also used in several medicinal remedies.

34 & 72. BLACK POPLAR — *Populus nigra ssp. betulifolia*

Grows to 30m and can live for 200 years, this tree is becoming rarer in the countryside. Dark brown bark often looks black and is full of fissures and cracks. Leaves are shiny, green and heart shaped with fine, tiny hairs. Red male catkins and green-yellow female catkins grow on different trees and are wind pollinated. The females develop fluffy seeds which fall in autumn. The catkins provide pollen for bees, while birds eat the seeds. It is a food plant for many moths including the poplar hawk moth. The fine, white wood was used to make cartwheels and floorboards. It can be coppiced to provide bean sticks and clothes pegs.

27 & 69. BLACKTHORN — *Prunus spinosa*

Spiny and dense the tree grows to 7m with dark brown bark. Commonly used as a hedging plant. Green leaves are slightly wrinkled, oval with a pointed end. White flowers contain male and female parts and bloom in March and April. They develop into blue-black berries or sloes. Bees enjoy the nectar, caterpillars of many moths eat the leaves and birds like to nest in the

TRAIL GUIDE

ALONG BOTH NEAR (BLUE) AND FAR (ORANGE) ROUTES YOU WILL BE ABLE TO ENJOY OUR UNIQUE SELECTION OF BRITISH NATIVE TREES AND LOOK OUT FOR SOME LOCAL ANIMALS IN THE FORM OF WOODEN SCULPTURES.

THE NUMBERS ON THE MAP ARE PRINTED ON SIGNS BY THE CORRESPONDING TREES ON THE TRAIL. THE SIGNS ALSO TELL YOU THE TREE'S NAME AND A QR CODE TO HELP YOU READ ABOUT THE TREES, USING A MOBILE PHONE.

blackthorn and eat the caterpillars and sloes. The timber is traditionally used for walking sticks while the sloes are used in wines, preserves and sloe gin.

46. BOX — *Buxus sempervirens*

Slow growing, box is used in gardens clipped into topiary and hedges. It can grow to 12m with smooth grey bark that develops fissures with age. Small, oval, waxy, green leaves grow on short stalks. Clusters of green-yellow flowers arrive in April and May. They contain male and female parts and are wind pollinated. A green, dry capsule develops which ripens into a brown seed case. The box is liked by bees and provides dense shelter for small mammals and birds. The yellow timber is used to make violin pegs and musical instruments. It is toxic and may cause stomach upsets and skin irritation.

33 & 60. BUCKTHORN — *Rhamnus cathartica*

Grows to 10m with grey-brown bark and spiny branches. Leaves are a glossy dark green, turning yellow in autumn. Yellow-green flowers are pollinated by insects which travel between the male and female flowers on different trees. The females develop into purple-black berries, eaten and dispersed by birds. It is a food plant to the brimstone butterfly and provides

nectar to bees and other insects. The wood is rarely used although the fruits and bark can make a yellow dye. The berries have a laxative effect giving it the name purging blackthorn.

41. COMMON OAK — *Quercus robur*

Most full-grown oaks reach a height of 30m. The smooth and silvery bark of young trees becomes more deeply fissured with age. The leaves are smooth and around 10cm long with 4-5 lobes on each side. Oaks form catkins in the spring and the acorn fruits develop from green to brown before falling to the ground in autumn. Oaks provide habitat for hundreds of insects and the acorns are eaten by mammals like badgers, deer and squirrels. Woodpeckers and bats can also live in the trees. The timber of the English oak is very strong and used to build boats, architectural beams and barrels.



TREE CHECKLIST

- 1. Copper beech
- 2. Sessile oak
- 3. Wych elm
- 4. English elm
- 5. Rowan
- 6. Crack willow
- 7. Hawthorn
- 8. Basket willow
- 9. Alder buckthorn
- 10. Wayfaring tree
- 11. Spindle tree
- 12. Wild Cherry
- 13. Holly
- 14. Whitebeam
- 15. Scots Pine
- 16. Bay willow
- 17. Crab apple
- 18. Elder
- 19. Yew
- 20. Alder
- 21. Juniper
- 22. Hazel
- 23. Midland hawthorn
- 24. Ash
- 25. Purple willow
- 26. Grey willow
- 27. Blackthorn
- 28. Hornbeam
- 29. Bird cherry
- 30. White willow
- 31. Downy birch
- 32. Goat willow
- 33. Buckthorn
- 34. Black poplar
- 35. Devon whitebeam
- 36. Plymouth pear
- 37. Whitty pear
- 38. Field maple
- 39. Strawberry tree
- 40. Beech
- 41. Common oak
- 42. Sweet chestnut
- 43. Almond willow
- 44. Wild service tree
- 45. Silver birch
- 46. Box
- 47. Small-leaved lime
- 48. Large-leaved lime
- 49. Wild pear
- 50. Aspen
- 51. Midland hawthorn
- 52. Bird cherry
- 53. Grey willow
- 54. Purple willow
- 55. Elder
- 56. Hornbeam
- 57. Bay willow
- 58. White willow
- 59. Goat willow
- 60. Buckthorn
- 61. Hazel
- 62. Yew
- 63. Field maple
- 64. Downy birch
- 65. Whitebeam
- 66. Crab apple
- 67. Juniper
- 68. Scots pine
- 69. Blackthorn
- 70. Plymouth pear
- 71. Devon whitebeam
- 72. Black poplar
- 73. Alder
- 74. Whitty pear
- 75. Ash

1. COPPER BEECH — *Fagus sylvatica f. purpurea*

A cultivated form of the common beech. Grows to over 30m but has shallow roots so can be blown over. Deep purple leaves develop in spring and turn coppery in autumn. Fruits develop as beech nuts called mast and are contained in a prickly case. Beech leaves are eaten by caterpillars and the mast is enjoyed by mice, voles, squirrels and birds. The bark is often home to fungi and lichen. Beech wood is hard and used for furniture. It was traditionally used to smoke herring.

17 & 66. CRAB APPLE — *Malus sylvestris*

Grow gnarled and twisted to 10m with a greyish brown bark. Ancestor of the many varieties of apple trees. Pointy brown leaf stubs develop on short stalks and have hairy tips. They grow into glossy, green, 6cm leaves. The blossom is sweetly scented, attracting bees and other insects to pollinate it. The small apple-like buds develop to around 3cm

yellow-green fruits. Birds and mammals eat the fruits and disperse the seeds. The nectar and pollen are great for bees and the leaves are eaten by several moth caterpillars. Trees are planted to help pollinate other apples and the fruits are used in jams and jellies. The wood is pinkish in colour and used in turning and carving.

6. CRACK WILLOW — *Salix fragilis*

The crack willow grows to 25m tall and is hard to tell apart from the white willow. The bark is dark brown and develops deep fissures with age. The leaves are long and dark green on the top and a lighter green underneath. The catkins arrive before the leaves and once pollinated become fluffy 'pussy willow'. Trees tend to grow alongside rivers and lakes. The catkins provide pollen for bees and other insects and the leaves are used by some moths. The willow stems are very flexible and are used for weaving a huge variety of useful objects including baskets.