



— THE —
HEART
— OF —
ENGLAND
FOREST

Planting tomorrow's great native woodland

Discover more at heartofenglandforest.org



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TREE GUIDE

*Get to know the native broadleaf trees
that make up the Heart of England Forest.*



Welcome...



Hello and welcome to the Heart of England Forest!

As we roll back the loss of England's native woodland and the Forest continues to stretch across the heart of England, we can see an exciting and positive change on the landscape.

So far, we have planted nearly 1.9 million trees, creating the largest, new native woodland in the country, right on the doorstep of large cities like Birmingham and Coventry.

And as we progress towards our goal – a woodland of 13 million trees – we can see how this transformation is benefiting England's natural environment. With native wildlife returning to the area and endangered species now thriving, the forest is fast becoming a haven for nature and nature lovers alike.

With your help, we can achieve our vision of creating and conserving a 30,000 acre Forest for the benefit of the environment, wildlife and people. A special place of natural beauty for our children and grandchildren to cherish.

Thank you for all your support.

Stephen Coffey
Head Forester,
Heart of England Forest

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Our trees

Here at the Heart of England Forest we only plant native broadleaf species. This handy tree guide introduces you to some of the 30 beautiful, native trees that are planted in the Forest. Together, they will create a forest that looks, smells and feels like the natural English woodlands we have lost.

These magnificent trees will be preserved for generations to come, and hopefully you will be able to spot some of them as you enjoy wandering through our enchanting woodlands.

Don't forget to check them off when you see them.



ENGLISH OAK



Quercus robur

A symbol of strength and the national tree of many countries, including England, this species dominates deciduous woodland and accounts for around 35% of all the saplings we plant.

Height: Up to 40m.

Where to find: Lowland woodlands.

Leaves: Dark green with wavy edge.

Fruit: Acorns with a stalk.

Flowers: Pale green male catkins and reddish-brown female flower.

Wildlife value: Supports up to 400 insect species, feeding a wide range of birds and small mammals.

Did you know? One of the UK's largest oak trees stands in the heart of Sherwood Forest, and according to folklore it was Robin Hood's headquarters!



SESSILE OAK



Quercus petraea

The crown of this majestic, deciduous tree is domed, with branches that are straighter than those of the English oak. Also, its leaves have longer stalks and its trunk is more upright.

Height: Up to 40m.

Where to find: Upland forest, hilly areas and drier soils.

Leaves: Dark green with wavy edge.

Fruit: Acorns without stalks ('sessile').

Flowers: Green male catkins and hairy, red female buds.

Wildlife value: Provides a habitat for over 280 insect species, roosting bats and nesting birds. The acorns are a food source for a number of birds, red squirrels and badgers.

Did you know? In a good year, the sessile oak can produce up to 50,000 acorns, but it does not yield its first good crop until it is around 40 to 50 years old!





SWEET CHESTNUT

Castanea sativa

This spectacular, broad-crowned, deciduous tree is regarded as an 'honorary native', introduced by the Romans. In old age, it can become hollow, making the perfect woodland den!

Height: Up to 35m.

Where to find: Southern England, woods and copses.

Leaves: Long, oblong and glossy with noticeable parallel veins.

Fruit: Shiny, red-brown nuts in a green, spiky case.

Flowers: Long, yellow catkins of mostly male flowers, with female flowers at the base.

Wildlife value: Important food source for insects looking for nectar, and squirrels feast on the nuts.

Did you know? The Romans introduced the sweet chestnut into Britain to grow the nuts, which were ground into flour or roasted to feed the legionnaires.



BEECH

Fagus sylvatica

Often considered the queen of British trees, this impressive deciduous species has such delicate bark that any carvings, like lovers' initials, stay on the tree for many years before it can heal itself.

Height: Up to 50m.

Where to find: Woodland, chalky or loamy soils.

Leaves: Shiny, green ovals with wavy edge.

Fruit: Beechnuts ('beachmast') held in a prickly casing.

Flowers: Tassel-like male catkins and female flowers surrounded by a casing.

Wildlife value: Supports many species of fungi. Birds and mammals feast on the fruit.

Did you know? In some countries, dried beech leaves are used instead of feathers as a stuffing for mattresses and pillows.



COMMON ALDER

Alnus glutinosa

A deciduous tree belonging to the birch family, alder trees adapt to conditions quickly and grow rapidly, so are ideal for re-establishing woodlands.

Height: Up to 20m.

Where to find: Damp places, riverbanks.

Leaves: Large, almost round and dark green.

Fruit: Clusters of small cones.

Flowers: Yellow male catkins and green female catkins.

Wildlife value: Roots make great otter nests. Home to several insects, lichens and fungi.

Did you know? Alpine farmers are said to use the leaves to alleviate rheumatism, placing a heated bag full of them on the affected area.



SILVER BIRCH

Betula pendula

This elegant, slender deciduous tree owes its common name to the grey, white or silver bark on its trunk, which appears to peel away like paper.

Height: Up to 20m.

Where to find: Dry woodland and moors.

Leaves: Light green triangle with serrated edge.

Fruit: Female catkins thicken and turn red.

Flowers: Long, yellow-brown male catkins and short, green female catkins.

Wildlife value: Open canopy allows a variety of plants to grow beneath. Provides food and habitat for over 300 insect species.

Did you know? The silver birch is Finland's national tree. Leafy, fragrant boughs of silver birch (called 'vihta' or 'vasta') are used to gently beat oneself in Finnish sauna culture!





HORNBEAM

Carpinus betulus

Similar to beech, this deciduous tree can live for more than 300 years, and yields a very strong timber that was used to make furniture, butchers' chopping blocks and cogs for windmills.

Height: Up to 25m.

Where to find: Mainly found in South East England. Associated with oak woodlands.

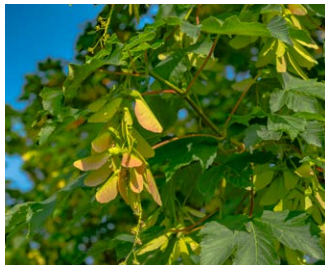
Leaves: Green, oval, toothed and pleated with pointed tip.

Fruit: Papery, oval, winged 'samaras'.

Flowers: Long, yellow male catkins and short, green female catkins.

Wildlife value: Important food source for caterpillars of a number of moth species.

Did you know? The name 'hornbeam' derives from the hardness of the wood (likened to horn) and the old English word 'beam', meaning 'tree'.



SYCAMORE

Acer pseudoplatanus

A member of the maple family and the largest European maple, it is believed to have been introduced to the UK in the Middle Ages and is now a naturalised species. This deciduous tree is fast growing. When mature, it provides a grand, domed outline in the countryside.

Height: Up to 30m.

Where to find: Common throughout Britain they grow in almost any soil type.

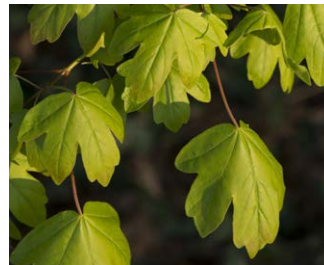
Leaves: Dark green, large with five lobes and pointed tip.

Fruit: Winged fruit 'samaras'.

Flowers: Yellow-green, dangling clusters of flowers.

Benefits to wildlife: Flowers produce abundant nectar, and the seeds are a food source for birds and small mammals.

Did you know? Sycamore seeds are known as 'helicopters' because their wings rotate similar to a helicopter's propeller.



FIELD MAPLE

Acer campestre

The UK's only native maple, this deciduous species is widely planted as an ornamental tree in gardens and parks due to its tolerance of pollution and beautiful, rich autumn colours.

Height: Up to 15m.

Where to find: Woodland, hedgerows.

Leaves: Small, dark green with five rounded lobes.

Fruit: Reddish-green, winged 'samaras'.

Flowers: Clusters of yellow-green, cup-shaped flowers.

Wildlife value: Attractive to aphids, and the flowers provide nectar. The leaves are a source of food for several caterpillars.

Did you know? The field maple was chosen as one of the trees to line the aisle of Westminster Abbey at the royal wedding of Kate and William as it symbolises reserve and humility.



SMALL LEAVED LIME

Tilia cordata

Depicted in our Heart of England Forest logo, this deciduous ancient tree dates back to the end of the last Ice Age and is becoming an increasingly rare sight in Britain.

Height: Up to 40m.

Where to find: Well drained, lime rich soil.

Leaves: Heart shaped with red-brown hairs on the underside.

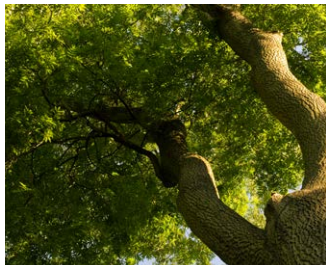
Fruit: Small, round, nut-like.

Flowers: Erect clusters of green-yellow, sweet-smelling flowers.

Wildlife value: Important food source for insects looking for nectar, and the leaves are very attractive to aphids.

Did you know? The flowers can be dried to make a soothing tea (called 'Linden Tea' or 'Tieull'), which was used during the war to calm nerves.





ASH

Fraxinus excelsior

Ash is the 3rd most common tree in Britain. The last time we planted ash was in 2012 due to the threat of the ash dieback fungal disease, which we have sadly now found some cases of within the forest.

Height: Up to 35m.

Where to find: River banks and lime rich soils.

Leaves: 7-13 toothed, light green, oval leaflets.

Fruit: Winged fruit ('keys').

Flowers: Dense clusters of tiny, purple flowers.

Wildlife value: Leaves are a food source for a number of caterpillars, and, like most trees, a variety of birds use the tree for nesting.

Did you know? In Norse Viking mythology, the ash was regarded as the 'tree of life'. In Britain, it was believed to have healing powers, and widely considered a source of magic and mystery.



COMMON PRIVET

Ligustrum vulgare

This fast-growing, deciduous or semi-evergreen shrub or small tree makes a good, dense hedge if clipped regularly.

Height: Up to 4m.

Where to find: Lime rich soils.

Leaves: Shiny, dark green and oval.

Fruit: Clusters of small, black berries.

Flowers: 'Panciles' of creamy-white, unpleasantly scented, tubular flowers.

Wildlife value: Ideal nesting site for several birds. Flowers attract insects, and birds feast on the berries.

Did you know? The berries are poisonous to humans, but are relished by birds, especially thrushes.



WILLOW

Salix

In the Heart of England Forest, we plant three of the 400 different species of willow – grey, purple osier and common osier. Also known as 'sallows' and 'osiers'. Osier 'withies' are traditionally used for basket making and weaving.

Height: Up to 7-10m.

Where to find: Woodlands, hedgerows and damp soil.

Leaves: Long, thin and dark green (except grey willow, which has oval leaves).

Fruit: Female catkins turn into fruit capsules.

Flowers: Yellowish male catkins and greenish female catkins (but on separate trees).

Wildlife value: Catkins provide nectar, and the branches make good nesting sites for birds.

Did you know? Grey willow is sometimes called 'pussy willow' after the silky, grey female flowers, which look similar to a cat's paw. Also, the first aspirin was derived from willow bark.



ASPEN

Populus tremula

This spectacular deciduous tree of shimmering leaves is a very hardy species that tolerates long, cold winters and short summers, and grows very large, very quickly!

Height: Up to 20m.

Where to find: North and West Scotland. Woodland and copse edges in England.

Leaves: Green, large and round with blunt teeth.

Fruit: Female catkins release fluffy seeds.

Flowers: Green-brown male catkins and green female catkins (but not on the same tree).

Wildlife value: Woodpeckers nest in holes in the tree.

Did you know? The botanical name 'tremula' describes the way the leaves 'tremble' in the slightest breeze.





BLACK POPLAR

Populus nigra

The black poplar is a large robust tree that can live for as long as 200 years. It gets its name from its distinctive, gnarly bark, which although actually dark brown, often appears to be black. Sadly it is the most endangered native timber tree in Britain.

Height: Up to 30m.

Where to find: Close to streams and along hedgerows.

Leaves: Finely toothed, smooth and triangular.

Fruit: Once fertilized, female catkins develop into fluffy cotton wool like seeds.

Flowers: Male catkins are red and hang down. Female catkins are yellow-green and stand.

Wildlife value: Important food plant for the caterpillars of many moths. Their catkins are also an early source of pollen and nectar for bees and other insects.

Did you know?

The black poplar featured heavily in the paintings of John Constable.



WILD SERVICE TREE

Sorbus torminalis

Sometimes called the 'chequer' or 'checker' tree, this deciduous species is highly valued at the Heart of England Forest because of its rarity in England.

Height: Up to 15m.

Where to find: Ancient woodland and hedgerows.

Leaves: Dark green, unequal lobes, similar to maple.

Fruit: Tiny, brown 'pomes'.

Flowers: Clusters of small, white flowers.

Wildlife value: Flowers provide nectar, and the fruits feed many birds. The leaves are a source of food for several caterpillars.

Did you know? The fruits are edible when over-ripe ('bleted') and taste similar to dates, and were once given as sweets to children and made into an alcoholic drink.



ROWAN

Sorbus aucuparia

This popular, deciduous tree with feather-like leaves and bright red fruits was thought to ward off evil spirits, so was planted in churches and outside houses as protection.

Height: Up to 15m.

Where to find: Woodland margins and hedgerows.

Leaves: 5-8 pairs of dark green oval, toothed leaflets.

Fruit: Small, bright orange to red 'pomes'.

Flowers: Clusters of pungent, sweet-smelling creamy-white flowers.

Wildlife value: Flowers provide nectar, and the fruit is a rich source of food for many birds.

Did you know? Rowan is a great source of vitamin C. It tastes bitter when fresh, but can be made into a delicious jelly that goes well with meat or game dishes.



WILD CHERRY

Prunus avium

Also known as 'gean' and 'sweet cherry', this deciduous tree is perhaps one of the prettiest native woodland trees, and is a popular ornamental tree for gardens.

Height: Up to 30m.

Where to find: Woodland margins and hedgerows.

Leaves: Green, oval and toothed.

Fruit: Shiny, red cherries.

Flowers: Clusters of white, cup-shaped flowers.

Wildlife value: Flowers provide nectar, and birds and small mammals feast on the cherries.

Did you know? The second part of its botanical name, 'avium', refers to birds, which eat the cherries and disperse the seed!





WHITEBEAM

Sorbus aria

This deciduous tree is particularly eye-catching in spring when the pale underside of its leaves gives the whole crown a striking silvery white look.

Height: Up to 15m.

Where to find: Woodland margins and hedgerows.

Leaves: Thick, dark green, shiny, oval and toothed edge.

Fruit: Bright red berries.

Flowers: Clusters of creamy-white flowers.

Wildlife value: Berries are readily eaten by birds, and the leaves are food for a number of caterpillars.

Did you know? The common name is Anglo-Saxon. The German word for tree is 'baum', and the 'white' element comes from the appearance of the tree.



GUELDER ROSE

Viburnum opulus

This is one of the prettiest deciduous native shrubs thanks to its large white flower heads and glistening red berries in autumn.

Height: Up to 4m.

Where to find: Damp scrub, old hedgerows and woods.

Leaves: Large, three lobes, with toothed edge.

Fruit: Groups of bright red berries.

Flowers: Clusters of small, white flowers surrounded by larger, flat, white flowers.

Wildlife value: Flowers attract insects, and many birds eat the berries.

Did you know? The berries are toxic if eaten raw, but can be cooked into a tasty jelly or jam. The bark can be effective in relieving muscle cramps when used in a tincture.



WAYFARING TREE

Viburnum lantana

The wayfaring tree is often planted as an ornamental shrub for its lovely, large flower heads and spectacular autumn colour. It also makes a good addition to countryside hedges.

Height: Up to 5m.

Where to find: Woodland edges, scrub, hedgerows.

Leaves: Large, grey-green oval with round-toothed edge.

Fruit: Groups of red berries ripening to black.

Flowers: Small, cream, tubular flowers form a domed flower head ('umbel').

Wildlife value: Flowers attract insects, and the berries are an important food for birds.

Did you know? The wayfaring tree is so called as it is a common sight along roadsides and footpaths, especially on dry, limestone soils.



SPINDLE

Euonymus europaea

The spindle is a very attractive deciduous woodland shrub with a magnificent autumn display of leaf and seed colours.

Height: Up to 7m.

Where to find: Hedgerows, woodland edges.

Leaves: Green, oval with toothed edge.

Fruit: Bright pink pods with bright orange seeds that resemble popcorn.

Flowers: Clusters of tiny, greenish-yellow flowers.

Wildlife value: Flowers are a rich source of nectar, and the leaves attract aphids and caterpillars.

Did you know? The creamy-white wood is very hard and dense, and was once used for spindles, skewers, pegs and knitting needles.





HAZEL

Corylus avellana

This attractive, deciduous shrub or small tree is one of the most important woody plants for 'coppicing', a traditional method of woodland management.

Height: Up to 12m.

Where to find: Woodland, scrub, hedgerows.

Leaves: Large, heart-shaped, mid-green, toothed and hairy.

Fruit: Nut held in woody husk.

Flowers: Yellow male catkins and short, red female tufts.

Wildlife value: Leaves and nuts are an important food source for birds, the dormouse and other small mammals.

Did you know? In spring, hazel is so bendy that you can tie it in a knot without it breaking!



DOGWOOD

Cornus sanguinea

A popular ornamental plant, this shrub or small tree is used in gardens for its rich crimson colour in autumn. It also forms a good natural barrier along watersides.

Height: Up to 10m.

Where to find: Prefers damp soil.

Leaves: Bright green, oval with curving veins.

Fruit: Small, black berries ('dogberries').

Flowers: Clusters of creamy-white flowers.

Wildlife value: The flowers attract insects and many birds and mammals eat the berries.

Did you know? In the past, bark-free branches of dogwood were used as toothbrushes, and tea made from the bark could be used to treat pain and fever.



Tree- mendous support

The Heart of England Forest is an inspiring, ambitious charity and we are hugely grateful to the support of volunteers, friends, trusts and companies who play a crucial role in helping the forest to grow! In particular we'd like to recognise local company, **Leader**, who have recently supported our work. **James**, Managing Director explains further:

“Leader, is a Warwickshire based PR, Design and Marketing consultancy. In 2015 we celebrated our 50th anniversary and in commemoration supported the planting of ‘Leader Wood’, a 6.5 acre parcel within the Heart of England Forest that is now clothed in native trees.

Leader has also been pleased to support the production of this handy ‘Tree Guide’, not only to foster a better understanding of the wonderful trees that form the forest, but also because our founder, Bryan Holden, is a

keen botanical illustrator and has provided all the line drawings of leaves, fruits and flowers used in this guide.

We hope you enjoy discovering more about the trees that are returning to their natural home in the Heart of England Forest – an amazing recreation of our native broadleaf woodland.”

James Holden

Leader.
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Will you help the forest grow?

The **Heart of England Forest** is committed to planting tomorrow's great native woodland – right in the heart of the Midlands.

Our goal is to reach 30,000 acres and work has already begun. Nearly 1.9 million trees have already been planted. The forest is set to be a haven of airy glades, shady canopies and safe habitats for our native wildlife. It will be a rich, joined-up collection of new and ancient woodlands, meandering across the heart of England.

This is an ambitious vision and we'd love for you to come and see it for yourself! Whether you join our forest team on a Woodland Walk, attend an event in the forest or use this guide as you explore our paths and trails, it would be great to see you out and about in the Heart of England Forest.

For more details about what you can do today, please go to heartofenglandforest.org

Find out about guided walks, forest events and new walking routes at:
facebook.com/heartofenglandforest

Thank you, we look forward to seeing you soon.