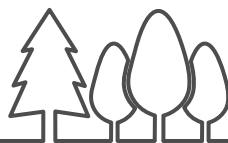




HEDGEMEAD PARK TREE TRAIL



FRIENDS OF HEDGEMEAD PARK



Welcome to the Hedgemead Park Tree Trail, a self-guided walk around the park's many fascinating and beautiful trees.

The Friends have selected 28 specimens for you to visit, the locations of which are shown on the map overleaf. These include four '**Champion Trees**' and four others marked as '**Notable**' or '**Remarkable**', as recorded by the Tree Register of Britain & Ireland. The trail starts and ends at the Friends' notice board, in the area below the bandstand.



Look out for the black labels attached to each tree. If you've got a smartphone handy, try scanning the QR code to access more information on that tree.

Remember, the trees dramatically change throughout the seasons, so please do come back to see what they look like at different times in the year.

The History of Hedgemoor Park

Hedgemoor Park has a fascinating but tragic history. Although you wouldn't know it now, 150 years ago the area we know as Hedgemoor Park was home to a large population of artisans.

That is, until the period 1875 to 1881 when a series of landslips on the sloping ground above The Paragon and London Street rendered whole terraces of houses dangerously uninhabitable. This caused much hardship as businesses and livelihoods were destroyed. The City Corporation had little option but to demolish around 135 houses and, after much debate, resolved to re-purpose the unstable land as a public park.



Photo copyright: Bath & North East Somerset Council

After a huge landscaping and planting effort the 'Hedgemoor Pleasure Grounds' were opened in 1889. The park was progressively enlarged until reaching its present size in 1904.

So out of others' sorrow, and thanks to those Victorian civic visionaries, we now have a wonderful public open space, packed full of mature trees and natural wonder. We can be relatively certain that many of the older trees here would have been planted between 1888-1904. Some of these are now recorded by the Tree Register as having special interest.

The Tree Register

The Tree Register is a charitable organisation that maintains a unique database of over 200,000 of the most notable trees to be found in the British Isles. It is dedicated to celebrating Britain's wonderful tree heritage and the organisation is home to the definitive list of 'Champion Trees'. Hedgemoor Park contains two trees of national significance, four County Champions, two others recorded as 'Notable'.



Hidden creatures



Children - can you spot the little animals, insects and artefacts we've hidden in some of the trees? Here's a clue ...

If you're sharp-eyed you may be able to find around 12 items!



HEDGEMEAD PARK'S BIGGEST & BEST

WIDEST: London Plane (Tree #1)

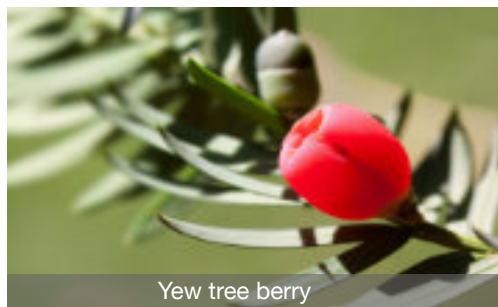
This tree is the widest in Hedgemead Park. Its girth is a whopping 6.07m, which means it's old (probably 130 years) and its roots have a good supply of water. The only other comparable tree of this type is in Abbey Green, Bath.

KNOBBLIEST: Red Horse Chestnut (Tree #3)

Spotted the strange knobbly burrs growing from the tree's trunk and branches? They're a characteristic of this hybrid. Slightly odd, aren't they?

MOST LONG LIVED AND MOST POISONOUS: Yew (Tree #4)

Although this specimen is probably only 120 years old, Yew trees can live for well over 1000 years. And they're very poisonous, all parts (except the fleshy red berry) are highly toxic to humans and animals. In medieval times, Yew wood was highly prized for making longbows because of its strength and springiness. And in the 20th Century, Yew leaves were used to synthesise a chemotherapy drug employed in the treatment of cancers.



Yew tree berry

WEIRDEST ROOTS: Copper Beech (Tree #6)

It's difficult to overlook this tree's extraordinary tangle of exposed roots. Weirdly, it was a fashionable planting technique in Victorian times.

SPOOKIEST: Weeping Ash (Tree #9)

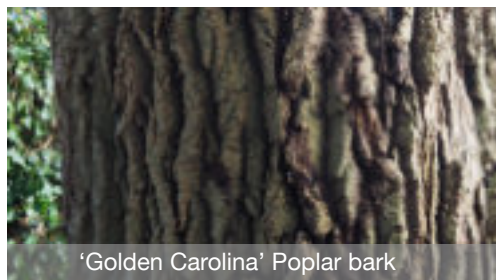
This tree has the oddest shape - spooky, even! Weeping Ash trees are often grafted onto rootstock to accentuate the weeping habit. The graft takes time to establish, so it's thought the young tree initially throws out branches at odd angles before going vertical.

MESSIEST: Common Lime (Tree #11)

The Common Lime is messy! It grows a profusion of stem sprouts, sheds twigs and branches and its leaves often host heavy aphid populations resulting in sticky honeydew deposits on everything underneath the tree. On the plus side, when in flower, Lime trees have a wonderful scent. This is just one of four types of 'Lime' tree on this trail. Can you name the others?

TALLEST AND GNARLIEST: 'Golden Carolina' Poplar (Tree #22)

At 28m, this is the tallest tree in Hedgemead Park. Also its bark is the gnarliest - just look at how deeply fissured it is - providing a wonderful habitat for invertebrates.



'Golden Carolina' Poplar bark

MOST CONFUSED:

1. 'Silver Queen' Holly (Tree #10)

This is a male tree.

2. 'Golden King' Holly (Tree #20)

Yes, you've guessed it - it's a female tree. These botanists, eh!



1 London Plane



Platanus x hispanica 'Pyramidalis'

(Height: 25.5m. Girth: 607cm)

TREE REGISTER: REMARKABLE (JOINT BRITISH CHAMPION)

This tree is a very large and impressive specimen and has been identified as an unusual clone called 'Pyramidalis'. This, and another in Abbey Green, Bath are the largest examples known to exist in Britain.

2 Nootka Cypress

Chamaecyparis nootkatensis

The Nootka Cypress is one of the least common fir trees and is native to the coastal regions of North-Western America. The name 'nootkatensis' derives from the tree's discovery in the lands of the first nation people of British Columbia, known by European settlers as the 'Nootka'.

3 Red Horse Chestnut



Aesculus x carnea

(Height: 18.0m. Girth: 289cm)

TREE REGISTER: NOTABLE

The Red Horse Chestnut is a hybrid between two common varieties of the *Aesculus* genus. This specimen is grafted onto rootstock at 1.5m above ground and is a fine example of the hybrid. In Spring it produces lovely spires of red/pink flowers.

4 Yew

Taxus baccata

The Yew is a long-lived evergreen conifer, which has held a deep spiritual significance since pagan times. Unlike other conifers the fruits are not borne in a cone but as a single seed encased in a red, fleshy berry-like structure. All parts of the tree are highly poisonous to humans and many animals when ingested.

5 Purple Sycamore

Acer pseudoplatanus 'Purpurea'

A large, vigorously growing deciduous tree with a wide conical crown. The 5-lobed, attractively coloured leaf differs from other sycamores in that it has a dark green surface and a red-purple underside, hence the tree's common name.

6 Purple/Copper Beech



Fagus sylvatica f. *purpurea*

The Copper Beech is a cultivated form of the Common Beech and is planted for its distinctive leaves, which are deep purple in spring and turn to a coppery shade in the autumn. Beech trees provide a wonderful habitat and food source for many insects and animals. There is another fine specimen in the north end of the park.

7 Coral Bark Willow



Salix alba var. *vitellina* 'Britzensis'

(Height: 24m. Girth: 508cm)

TREE REGISTER: COUNTY CHAMPION (GIRTH & HEIGHT)

This tree is a magnificent specimen of the cultivar 'Vitellina' and hybrid 'Britzensis', characterised by its display of bright orange-red shoots in Winter and Spring – hence its common name Coral Bark Willow or Scarlet Willow.

8 Tree of Heaven

Ailanthus altissima

The Tree of Heaven was introduced to the UK in the early 1750s and is frequently planted in gardens and parks for its attractive autumn foliage. The tree grows rapidly but rarely lives beyond 50 years. The branches ascend from the straight trunk, appearing to reach for the sky, hence its common name.

9 Weeping Ash



Fraxinus excelsior 'Pendula'

The Weeping Ash cultivar is often grafted on to Common Ash stock at around 2m to accentuate its weeping habit. Sometimes this results in the strangely contorted branching bole you see on this specimen. It's certainly characterful!

10 Silver Queen Holly

Ilex aquifolium 'Argentea Regina'

Despite its common name this is a berryless, male holly with yellow leaf-margins surrounding green-mottled centres.

11 Common Lime (avenue of seven trees)

Tilia x europaea

This specimen is the middle tree in an

avenue of pollarded Limes. The Common Lime is a hybrid between the Small-leaved Lime and the Large-leaved Lime (#25). Originally imported from Holland, it is the tallest broad-leaved tree in Britain (when not pollarded) and can live for 500 years.

12 Japanese Cedar

Cryptomeria japonica

The Japanese Cedar probably originated in China but was introduced to Japan many centuries ago, where it acquired its common name. It was imported into Britain in 1861 and became popular in Victorian gardens. It is the national tree of Japan and is known as Sugi or 'Hair Tree'.

13 Norway Maple

Acer platanoides 'Reitenbachii'

(Height: 16m. Girth: 188cm)

TREE REGISTER: COUNTY CHAMPION
(GIRTH & HEIGHT)

A hardy, frost resistant tree, surviving the harsh climate in Norway, this maple has acclimatised well to Britain since being brought here in the 17th century. Specimens like this one all originated from one nursery in Russia in the 1800's. Like other maples, the Norway Maple can be tapped for syrup.

14 Western Red Cedar

Thuja plicata

Introduced to Britain in 1853 from the west coast of Northern America, it has adapted well to Britain's climate and soils. It has a long slender trunk and can grow to 45m. The dense foliage attracts birds and insects.

15 Cut Leaf Lime

Tilia platyphyllos 'Laciniata'

TREE REGISTER: NOTABLE

There are many cultivars of large-leaved limes, of which Laciniata is one, so named because the leaves appear as if torn. This specimen has been overshadowed by the adjacent Beech and Chestnut trees, giving rise to its off-vertical shape.

16 Common Horse Chestnut

Aesculus hippocastanum

Well known for its 'conkers' contained

within green spiny covers, the Horse Chestnut was introduced to Britain in the late 16th century. Many horse chestnuts are affected by a leaf miner insect, which causes the leaves to shrivel and turn brown from July onwards.

17 Silver Lime

Tilia tomentosa

The Silver Lime gets its name from the leaves, which are green on top but covered in fine, silver coloured hairs on the underside. When caught in the wind, the foliage has a striking silvery appearance.

18 Black Pine (stand of three trees)

Pinus nigra

Introduced in the 19th Century, the black pine is fast growing and long lived. It is widely grown in the UK as an ornamental tree, and was popular with Victorians as an alternative to the Scots Pine.

19 Tulip Tree (pair of trees at gate)

Liriodendron tulipifera

The Tulip Tree is part of the Magnolia family and derives its name from its large flowers, which superficially resemble tulips. The tree can grow up to 50m in height. In Autumn the leaves turn a lovely yellow-orange, rendering the tree a beautiful sight in low sunlight.

20 'Golden King' Holly

Ilex x altaclerensis

'Golden King' is a small bushy evergreen tree with broad ovate, slightly spiny leaves margined with bright yellow. It produces a small quantity of brownish-red berries. Despite its name, it is in fact female – hence the berries.

21 Holm Oak

Quercus ilex

Holm Oaks are very slow growing and, unlike Common Oaks, evergreen. This specimen is a fine example and is likely to be old enough to pre-date the park. The name 'holm' means holly, possibly because of its superficial resemblance to the holly in Winter.



22 Golden Carolina Poplar

Populus x canadensis 'Aurea'

(Height: 28m. Girth: 390cm)



TREE REGISTER: COUNTY CHAMPION (GIRTH & HEIGHT)

This is a beautiful specimen of a Poplar variety native to Eastern North America. As well as being the tallest and largest known in Somerset, it is one of the top twelve specimens in Britain. At a height of 28m, it is currently the tallest tree in Hedgemoor Park.

23 Lawson's Cypress

Chamaecyparis lawsoniana

A tall, slender tree, the Lawson cypress is Britain's most popular conifer. The dense foliage provides shelter for birds early in the year before the deciduous trees have leaves. Introduced from Oregon in 1854, the seeds were sent to an Edinburgh seed firm called Messrs. Lawson.

24 Whitebeam

Sorbus aria

Charming and domestic, Whitebeam is rarely found in the wild but is a popular ornamental tree in parks and gardens. It gets its name from the white underside of the leaf.

25 Large-Leafed Lime

Tilia platyphyllos

Large-leaved lime is the rarest of our native limes. Unlike the Small-Leaved and hybrid Common Lime, the Large-Leaved



lime does not produce suckers from the base of the trunk. The tree attracts a wide variety of insects and their predators.

26 Baumann's Horse Chestnut

Aesculus hippocastanum 'Baumanii'

(Height: 28m. Girth: 495cm)



TREE REGISTER: REMARKABLE - THIRD LARGEST IN BRITAIN

'Baumanii' is a Swiss cultivar. Although longer lived than the Common Horse Chestnut it is sterile, so there are no 'conkers' to collect in the autumn. There are only two larger specimens in Britain, both located in Bath, which suggests they were all planted at the same time, from the same nursery.

27 Common Oak

Quercus robur



The ruling majesty of the woods, the wise old English oak holds a special place in our culture. It supports more life than any other native tree species. Although very slow growing, oaks produce one of the hardest and most durable timbers, which humans have utilised for thousands of years.

28 Variegated Sycamore

Acer pseudoplatanus f. variegatum



Sycamore is thought to have been introduced to the UK in the 1500s. The tree's leaves and flowers are attractive to many insect varieties and their predators and its seeds are eaten by birds and small mammals.

This guide, together with the tree labels found on each tree, have been funded by a generous grant from the National Lottery Community Fund.

Thank you to **#NationalLottery** players for making our tree trail possible.

FRIENDS OF HEDGEMOOR PARK



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