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Hollycroft Park Tree Trail



Contact details

Site address: Hollycroft Park • Shakespeare Drive • Hinckley • Leics LE10 0BG
Telephone Hollycroft ticket Office: 01455 634903
Web: www.hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk & www.hollycroftpark.co.uk

Transport

A site car park is located off Westray Drive.
Hollycroft Park is on bus routes number 86 and 75 from Hinckley Bus Station.

Please see previous page for park gate opening and closing times.



A guide to some of the trees in Hollycroft Park, Hinckley

Allowing visitors a leisurely walk, whilst finding out for themselves about the variety of different trees the park has to offer...





Hollycroft Park was opened in 1935 as part of the Silver Jubilee Celebration of King George V and Queen Mary. In 1930, Hinckley Urban District Council purchased a piece of land where children had played for many years from the Thomas Atkins Trust. This land was part of the Mill Hill farm known as Hollycroft Fields. Work on the park started in 1933 based on the design for the Happy Valley Park in North Wales. Features of the park included an arena to seat 1000 people with a bandstand, two hard tennis courts, a bowling green with pavilion and a four-acre pitch and putt golf course.

The original layout of the park has been retained in the main, although some changes have been planned to meet changing public needs. The majority of the ponds were filled in and some of the flowerbeds have been grassed over. However, there is still an abundance of shrubberies and formal beds.

This leaflet identifies and gives a brief description of some of the trees that have been planted at the park. The trail starts in front of the pavilion and continues around the park allowing visitors a leisurely walk, whilst finding out for themselves about the variety of different trees the park has to offer (see centre pages for the Tree trail map).



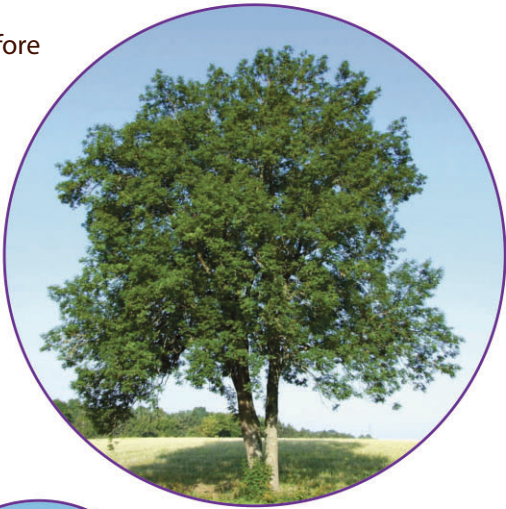
Foliage is poisonous to animals and all parts are poisonous to humans except for the red covering of seeds. Timber is red grained, hard and durable and used for making long-bows, furniture, flooring and barrel hoops.

32 Common ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) Europe and Asia Minor

Common throughout the British Isles except for parts of the Scottish Highlands and Islands. Seeds are borne on long slender wings, making up the fruit or 'keys'. Leaf fall in the autumn can be sudden while leaves are still green. Buds are black and leaves are opposite.

Susceptible to Ash dieback (*Chalara fraxinea*). Leaves are compound and made up of 9 -13 leaflets unlike the Single-leaved ash (*F. excelsior* 'Diversifolia') which has a simple leaf.

Timber is pale and easily bent and therefore used in making carts, wheels and sports equipment. Leaves are used for cattle fodder, bark for alleviating symptoms of fevers and leaves used for rheumatic and arthritic complaints.



29 Horse chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*) Albania and Greece

First introduced in 1616. A common parkland tree with spectacular panicles of white flowers in April to May and known for its conkers.

The name conker may come from the dialect word meaning 'hardnut' and perhaps related to French conque meaning a conch, as the game of conkers was originally played using snail shells. Conkers are also known regionally as obblyonkers or cheesers.

Unfortunately, Horse chestnuts are susceptible to Bleeding canker (*Pseudomonas syringae* pv *aesculi*), Leaf miner insect (*Cameraria ohridella*) and Guignardia leaf fungus (*Guignardia aesculi*) which can make the trees look unsightly throughout the summer, resulting in fewer Horse chestnuts surviving or being planted.



30 Hybrid cockspur thorn (*Crataegus x lavallei*)

Garden origin - France

A hybrid between *C. crus-galli* and an American species. Identified by its spring fruit, tapering or cuneate leaf shape and having few but stout thorns. Dark green leaves can be retained until December.

31 Common yew (*Taxus baccata*)

Europe, Algeria and Asia Minor to Persia

Although it is a Taxad, it is commonly referred to as one of our three native conifers. Flowers and trees are either male or female (dioecious). Trees can live up to 2000 years with a stem girth of 9 to 10m.

Yew is a shade-tolerant plant, common in churchyards and used for hedging and topiary. Ancient Britons planted Yews near their temples long before Christianity was introduced into England and branches of Yew were the usual signals to denote a house in mourning. The custom of planting the Yew in churchyards probably took its rise from Pagan superstition.



continued next page...

1 Purple beech (*Fagus sylvatica* 'Purpurea') Garden origin

Common beech is of European origin and grows from Spain and Greece to Scandinavia. Other cultivars include 'Cuprea' with copper foliage, 'Pendula' with weeping foliage and 'Heterophylla' with cut-leaved foliage. There are five Purple beech trees along Shakespeare Drive.



2 Foxglove tree (*Paulownia tomentosa*) China

Introduced via Japan in 1834. Foxglove-shaped flowers, 20 to 30cm long are displayed in May accompanying heart-shaped leaves. Other characteristics are glutinously sticky fruit and fragile branches.



3 Californian or Coast redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*)

California and Oregon



Discovered by Archibald Menzies in 1794 and introduced into England in 1843. With thick, fibrous, soft and spongy bark it is the world's tallest conifer, with one tree in Redwood National park, California called Hyperion, being measured in 2006 at 115.55m (379.1 ft) The average life span is 500 to 700 years. The oldest known specimen, felled in 1934 was 2,200 years old.

4 Indian bean tree (*Catalpa bignoniodes*) S.E. USA

Introduced in 1726. Short-lived, often only 40 to 50 years. Foxglove-like flowers with white and yellow markings in July and August. Frequently the last tree to come into leaf and not showing green until late June. Leaves are large and cordate shaped. There are varieties with yellow leaves and variegated leaves. Seeds are formed in long, slender pods.



5 Cypress oak (*Quercus robur* 'Fastigiata') Central Europe

An oak with fastigate, columnar or narrow habit, first propagated by grafting in Germany around 1783 but occurs in natural stands in the western Pyrenees.

6 Holm oak (*Quercus ilex*) Mediterranean region, S.W Europe

Cultivated in England since the 16th century. A large, majestic, evergreen and shade-tolerant tree which is resistant to salt laden, coastal winds. Silvery-white young

foliage appears in June with male catkins and female flowers followed by very small acorns

in the late summer. Holm oak is susceptible to Bleeding canker disease (*Phytophthora ramorum* and *P. kernoviae*.)



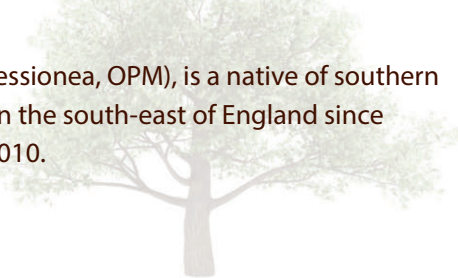
7 Common or Pedunculate oak (*Quercus robur*)

Europe from N.E. Russia to S.W. Asia and to Spain and N. Africa

The oldest oak pollards can be 12 to 13m in stem girth and may be 800 years old. Unpollarded oaks are usually less than 400 years old. The name pedunculate comes from the acorns which are borne on peduncles or stalks.

Oak timber has been important for ship building, railway carriages, furniture, panelling and barrel-making. Its bark is rich in tannins, widely used in leather tanneries. Oak galls produced by insects are, with iron used for ink making and medicinally to treat diarrhoea.

Oak processionary moth (*Thaumetopoea processionea*, OPM), is a native of southern and central Europe which has defoliated oaks in the south-east of England since 2006 and it was also identified in Yorkshire in 2010.



4

26 Silver birch (*Betula pendula*) Europe and Asia Minor

Native to most of Great Britain, growing best on well-drained ground. Silver birch is light-demanding and rapidly colonises bare ground. It is therefore known as a 'pioneer' species, under which other 'climax' species such as oak can germinate and flourish.

Silver birch can live in excess of 150 years. It is synonymous with Warty birch (*B. verrucosa*) and is otherwise known as 'Lady of the Woods'.



Mature Silver birch do not tolerate pruning as they do not produce true 'heartwood'. Seasoned timber is hard and strong and used for plywood, veneers, furniture, flooring and skis. Twigs are used for brushes; the sap is sugary and is fermented for alcoholic drinks and also used in shampoo. Birch tar oil is used as an insect repellent.

27 Sawara cypress (*Chamaecyparis pisifera*) Japan

Introduced in 1861. Rare in its typical state but with numerous garden cultivars and variants. Two here are *C. pisifera* 'Aurea' with yellow new growth fading to green during the summer and *C. pisifera* 'Squarrosa' with soft, bluish, juvenile leaves.



28 Japanese cherry (*Prunus serrulata* 'Kanzan')

Garden origin - Japan

First cultivated in 1913 with masses of large, semi-double, pink flowers. Semi-double meaning a plant which is intermediate between having single and double the number of outer stamens converted to petals in comparison to the original true species. Early bronze-purple foliage which is gold and pink, sometimes red in autumn. Mature trees will not tolerate heavy pruning and are susceptible to Silver-leaf disease and Blossom wilt.

13



23 Western red cedar (*Thuja plicata*) N.W. N. America

Sometimes called Arbor-vitae ('Tree of life') it was introduced in 1853 and grows to a height of 41m (135ft). It is an important timber tree in the USA where wood is cut into shingles which are used for cladding buildings and roofing.



With pineapple scented foliage it makes an excellent evergreen hedge and is shade tolerant. Unlike Leyland cypress it will retain foliage to ground level. The variety *Thuja plicata* 'Zebрина' has white-gold and green-gold Zebra stripes.

24 Common holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) W. C. and S. Europe



Native to all of the UK, except for Caithness, Orkney and Shetland. Very common and found as an understorey in woodland because it is shade tolerant and its seeds are spread by birds. Cultivated since ancient times it can grow to over 21m (65ft). Holly as a group displays a great variety of forms and colours with over 150 varieties in production.

Male and female flowers are usually borne on separate plants. For good fruiting trees, at least one male must be planted to every six females unless hermaphrodite trees are available. Leaves can show a great variation on a single tree. In shade, leaves tend to have spines but in the open, leaves can be spineless.

Berries are poisonous and young leaves were formerly used for treatment of fevers and rheumatism.

25 Weeping willow (*Salix x chrysocoma*) France

A beautiful, weeping tree first propagated around 1800. Common by large rivers and in gardens or parks it grows on wet, damp or dry soils. It is not suitable close to buildings with shallow foundations on shrinkable clay soils. Leaves unfold very early and are finely pubescent. Male catkins are slender and curved upwards. Normally it is only a male clone but sometimes female flowers are borne on the male catkin. Weeping willow can be susceptible to scab and canker.



8 Cedar of Lebanon (*Cedrus libani*) SW Asia

Thought to have been introduced into England in 1645 and can grow up to 30m in height (100 ft). The four species of cedar are thought to be geographical variations of one species naturally ranging from the Atlas Mountains of North Africa (*C. atlantica*), to Cyprus (*C. brevifolia*) through Turkey and Lebanon (*C. libani*) and in the Himalayas to Afghanistan (*C. deodara*).



Cones of Atlas cedars are sunken at the apex whereas cones of Deodar cedar are rounded at the apex and cones of the Cedar of Lebanon are barrel-shaped. Foliage at the young tips of branches also differ: Atlas cedars ascend, Cedars of Lebanon are level and Deodar cedars droop. Cyprian cedar is closely related to the Cedar of Lebanon but is smaller, with smaller leaves and cones.

9 Fastigiata hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus* 'Fastigiata') Europe

A cultivar of the native Hornbeam which has a conical shape when young but becomes rounded and open with age. Previously known as *C. pyramidalis*. Trees of pyramidal shape naturally occur in the wild in France and Germany.

Hornbeam is commonest and truly native on damp clays of S.E. England and it makes an excellent hedge.



10 Sessile oak (*Quercus petraea*) W., C. and S.E. Europe and W. Asia

Very like the Common oak but often hybridized making identification difficult. The base of a Sessile oak leaf is tapered (cuneate) with a long leaf stalk (petiole) (1 to 2 cm).

The base of a Common oak leaf has two lobes (auricles) extending towards the twig and a short petiole (4 to 10mm).



Sessile oak is typically found in the wetter north and west but is locally native in Leicestershire and found at Swithland Wood. Trees are susceptible to colonisation and defoliation by the Oak-leaf roller moth (*Tortrix viridana*) so called because larvae roll themselves up in a full-sized leaf to pupate.

11 Lawson cypress (*Chamaecyparis lawsoniana*)

S.W. Oregon and N.W. California

Seeds were introduced in 1854 to Lawson's nursery in Edinburgh. It is normally now propagated from cuttings and there are more than thirty cultivars commonly produced today with a wide variety of foliage colours and forms. It makes an excellent hedge if regularly trimmed but in its wild state Lawson cypress will reach 60m (200ft) in height.

Foliage of Lawson cypress can be distinguished from other cypresses by the translucent glands or 'windows' visible on the underside of the leaf when held up to the light and also the resinous, parsley-like scent when crushed. The crown also has a drooping leading shoot.

12 Turkey oak (*Quercus cerris*) S. and C. Europe and S.W. Asia

A large, fast growing tree introduced in 1735 with many original trees still flourishing in Devon. Winter buds and acorn cups are furnished with long, narrow, downy scales. Leaves are glossy dark green above and downy beneath. Timber is of little value. Chestnut weevils can develop inside Turkey oak acorns and then emerge to be highly damaging to commercial nut crops of Sweet chestnut.

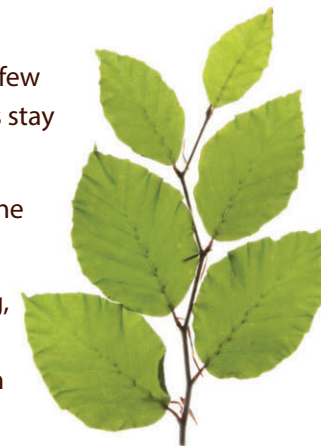


Common Beech continued...

Beech is tolerant of shade but casts heavy shade with very few plants able to grow underneath it. Marcescent, dead leaves stay attached to hedges through the winter.

At 36m (120ft) tall, the Meikleour beech hedge alongside the A93 in Perth and Kinross is the world's tallest hedge.

Wood is fine grained and used for furniture, coach-building, tool handles, kitchen utensils, charcoal and sabots (shoe made from a single block of wood or a shoe with a wooden sole and a leather or cloth upper).



21 Monterey cypress (*Cupressus macrocarpa*) SW Asia

Indigenous to two low cliffs near Monterey, California. Introduced in 1838 and abundant near coasts in west Britain and Ireland, it has a very dense canopy. Growing to a height of 37m (121ft) with a stem girth of 7.3m (24ft).

Monterey cypress was cross pollinated with Nootka cypress in Welshpool in 1838 giving rise to the notorious, generic hybrid-Leyland cypress.

When old it is hugely spreading and flat topped with long, level heavy branches susceptible to snow damage. Also susceptible to dieback caused by Corinium canker which can be spread by pigeons.

22 Brilliant sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus* "Brilliantissimum")

Garden origin

Of unknown British origin since 1900. A distinctive small tree of slow growth with shrimp-pink spring foliage, changing to pale yellow-green. The scion is grafted onto a Sycamore root-stock.



17 London Plane (*Platanus x hispanica*) Hybrid

The hybrid between Oriental plane and American plane probably arose in Spain or S. France in about 1650. First planted in England in 1680 with an original tree in Ely still surviving. Frequent in towns and city streets; it is tolerant of pollution, pollarding and pleaching.



Ripe fruit-balls which can be retained through the winter are a characteristic feature along with the peeling bark.

18 Indian horse chestnut (*Aesculus indica*) N.W. Himalayas

This tree has been removed due to ill health.

19 Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) C. and S. Europe and W. Asia

A large picturesque tree, probably introduced by the Romans, seeding freely almost everywhere and now naturalised in Great Britain. Hardy and tolerant of pollution and salt-laden coastal winds, it grows to a height of over 35m (115ft) and 7m (23ft) in girth. Sometimes known as 'Great maple' or 'Plane' in Scotland.

Sycamores support a high insect biomass and therefore support a large number of birds. Wood is white to yellowish and used for violin making, carving, turnery, veneers and kitchen utensils.



20 Common beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) S. and W. Europe

Native to S.E. and Midland England. Grows to over 40m (130ft) with silvery grey bark and straight, clean trunks. A dominant tree on chalk and well-drained soils, it will pollard when young but older trees do not respond well to pruning.

The density of seed production varies from year to year with heavy 'mast' years usually following hot summers of the previous year. Seeds contain edible oil which has been used for lighting and cattle cake.

continued next page...

13 Pin oak (*Quercus palustris*) N.America

Introduced in 1800 and uncommon. A large growing tree with small, broad acorns in shallow cups which take two years to mature. Leaves are shining and deeply lobed with deep scarlet autumn colour.



14 Common alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) Europe to Siberia and N.Africa

A native tree suited to wet and alkaline sites particularly lining open water, rocky streams, fens and carrs. Male catkins appear during March and April and seed cones are retained for several years. The purplish shoots are prominent in late summer. Nitrogen fixing root nodules enable survival in wet soils and make it suitable for reclamation sites.



Wood is durable underwater and is used for piles, barrels, and clogs. Tolerant of cutting, it was widely grown as a coppice, with poles used for charcoal in the manufacture of gunpowder.

15 Himalayan birch (*Betula utilis*) E. and C.Himalaya

B. jacquemontii is a variety of Himalayan birch introduced in 1880 with a more serrated, less hairy leaf, longer catkins and whiter bark. The transition between the natural ranges of the two species occurring in the Kumaon region, just west of Nepal.

16 Red maple (*Acer rubrum*) E.and C. N. America

A fast growing tree to a height of over 30m (100ft). Red flowers appear before the leaves in late March. Bright red, winged fruit appears in summer, followed by early scarlet, gold and deep red autumn colour. 'Scanlon' is a densely conic, columnar variety suitable for smaller spaces.



Hollycroft Park Tree Trail map

- 1 Purple beech
- 2 Foxglove tree
- 3 Californian or Coast redwood
- 4 Indian bean tree
- 5 Cypress oak
- 6 Holm oak
- 7 Common or Pedunculate oak
- 8 Cedar of Lebanon
- 9 Fastigate hornbeam
- 10 Sessile oak
- 11 Lawson cypress
- 12 Turkey oak
- 13 Pin oak

- 14 Common alder
- 15 Himalayan birch
- 16 Red maple
- 17 London plane
- 18 ~~Indian horse chestnut~~ see page 10
- 19 Sycamore
- 20 Common beech
- 21 Monterey cypress
- 22 Brilliant sycamore
- 23 Western red cedar
- 24 Common holly
- 25 Weeping willow
- 26 Silver birch
- 27 Sawara cypress
- 28 Japanese cherry
- 29 Horse chestnut
- 30 Hybrid cockspur thorn
- 31 Common yew
- 32 Common ash



- A** Bandstand
- B** Picnic Area
- C** Tennis Courts
- D** Wildlife Haven
- E** Bowling Green
- F** Pavilion & Kiosk
- G** Public Toilets
- H** Pitch & Put
- I** Car Park

