

HEADINGTON HILL PARK - TREE TRAIL - MOST INTERESTING COLLECTION.



From the list of special trees in the park the Friends have created a shorter list of the most interesting. This should enable a visitor with limited time, to have an informative and enjoyable walk around the park within half an hour.

- 5) Butternut** – (*Juglans cinerea*) – Sometimes known as the White Walnut. Very rare in the UK, this is an old and large specimen, 22 meters high with a spread of 34 meters. This tree is listed as one of the “Monumental Trees of England”. - It originates from the eastern USA and Canada where it is listed as “endangered”. The nut matures in mid autumn. The bark and nut rinds were once used to dye homespun cloth. During the American Civil War the Confederate soldiers were known as “butternuts” because their uniforms were coloured with butternut dye.
- 6) Foxglove Tree or Princess Tree**– (*Paulownia tomentosa*) – This is a group of 3 originating from a previously fallen tree. It is a native of China, with one of the largest leaves found in the UK, The tree produces violet foxglove like flowers in May. A tradition in Japan is that a tree is planted at the birth of a girl this fast-growing tree matures as she does. When she is eligible for marriage the tree is cut down and carved into wooden articles for her dowry.
- 7) Nettle Tree or Honeyberry** – (*Celtis australis*) – A group of 3 - It is confined to collections, and related to the Elm. Originally from Southern Europe and introduced into England in 1796. The fruit of this tree is much loved by birds and other wildlife. It is supposed to have been the “Lotus” fruit of the ancients. In the 8th century BC, Homer has Ulysses refer to the "Lotus-eaters" and the "lotus" in the *Odyssey*,
- 8) English Oak** – (*Quercus robur*) – A large and splendid tree with a spread of over 30 meters, and has a girth of 3.7 meters. This tree is of great age,(approx 150 years,) and is certainly one of the first trees planted in the arboretum when the Hall was built. It supports the highest biodiversity of insect herbivores, small mammals and birds of any British plant. The Oak is the national tree of England.
- 13) Black Birch** – (*Betula nigra*) – This is a rare species originating from the Eastern USA.. The attractive bark is variable, usually being dark grey-brown to pinkish-brown and scaly. The fruit is unusual among birches as it matures in late spring. It is composed of numerous tiny winged seeds packed between the catkin bracts. Native Americans used the boiled sap as a sweetener similar to maple syrup.
- 15) Pride of India or Golden Rain Tree** – (*Koelreuteria paniculata*) – Native of eastern Asia, and introduced from China in the 1760s. Unusual foliage with small panicles of yellow flowers, followed by papery bladder like seed pods ripening to pink in the autumn.

16) Japanese Bitter Orange. – (*Poncirus trifoliata*) – This tree is rare with only a few in the UK. Unusually it is a hardy member of the orange family, armed with large spines, lovely white scented flowers followed by small “bitter” oranges in the autumn (not edible). Studies have shown that *Poncirus trifoliata* contains “aurapten” at a high concentration, which is one of the functional components having immunity against “citrus tristeza virus” (CTV), which is responsible for the demise of millions of citrus trees.

19) Dawn Redwood – (*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*) – Thought to be extinct for 65m years until, in 1944, a small population were found in China. The smallest of the 3 giant redwoods but can still reach a height of 60 meters. Now widely distributed in parks and arboreta. The distinctive grooved bark develops into buttresses on the lower trunk. The deciduous foliage turns golden in the autumn. – (A large group of young trees have recently been planted at the bottom of South Park).

21) Katsura Trees – (*Cercidiphyllum japonicum*) – A group of 6 trees. A native of Japan and China. The Katsura tree has small, heart shaped, copper-toned green leaves which turn stunning shades of yellow, honey-orange and pink in the autumn, and as they fall, they produce a delicious and distinctive scent of burnt sugar or caramel from late summer/early autumn.

26) Handkerchief or Dove Tree – (*Davidia involucrata*) – Pair – This tree is strikingly unusual with white bracts around small flowers – It flowers in late May, and produces a fruit in the autumn. Named after Father Armand David (1826-1900) who discovered a single tree in China in 1869

30) Hop Hornbeam – (*Ostrya carpinifolia*) – This is the only *Ostrya* native to Europe but rare in the UK. The timber is very hard (*Ostrya* taken from Greek word “ostrua” – bone-like.) The leaves are similar to other hornbeams but it has a hop like fruit.

31) Chestnut Leaf Oak (*Quercus castanifolia*). Originally from Iran/north Africa, although introduced into the UK in 1846 it is still relatively rare. The leaf is like a sweet chestnut. The acorns are very bitter and only eaten by squirrels as a last resort.

33) Southern Beech or Roble Beech– (*Nothofagus obliqua*) – One of 43 species of *Nothofagus*, (and known as (*Lophozonia obliqua*) since 2013). Originally it came from Chile and Argentina, and was introduced into Britain in 1849 . The tree displays strong Autumn colour.

43) Bhutan Pine – (*Pinus wallichiana*) – This pine has leaves ("needles") that are in fascicles (bundles) of five and are up to 18 cm long, they are noted for being flexible along their length. The cones are large and banana shaped. It originates from the Himalayas.

48) Coastal Redwood – (*Sequoia sempervirens*) – Originally from the western USA and is the least common of the 3 giant redwoods in the UK. The Coastal Redwood is the world’s tallest tree which can reach heights of 115 meters and live for around 1,500 years.