



Tree Trail

WEST HAM PARK WALKS



Tree Trail

Follow the West Ham Park Tree Trail and discover the beauty of 25 species of trees and our National Collection of Liquidambar - all of which can be found in our 7 acre Ornamental Gardens. This horticultural oasis provides a pleasant and relaxing environment that has something for everyone venturing through the gates.

Many different species and a variety of trees can be found throughout West Ham Park. This leaflet focuses solely on the trees found in our Ornamental Gardens but as you take a stroll around the rest of the Park, don't forget to take a look at the other trees around you, such as the Victorian Avenue of London Planes and Limes, many of which date back to pre 1874, and the distinctive Lucombe Oak close to the Park's Linden Gate entrance.

To help recognise the trees in this leaflet use the photographs, description and the map below. In addition to this, all trees have been identified by numbered wooden posts.



Please note that this trail is suitable for wheelchair users



Sweet Gums

We begin at the Cairn.

In this area we have the National Collection of

Sweet Gums, Liquidambar ①

consisting of over 25 cultivars. Whilst this is a relatively young collection,

we hope to eventually move them into the open parkland to allow them to reach their full potential. In autumn the Liquidambar can be seen in their full beauty with an array of deep reds, purple and orange foliage.

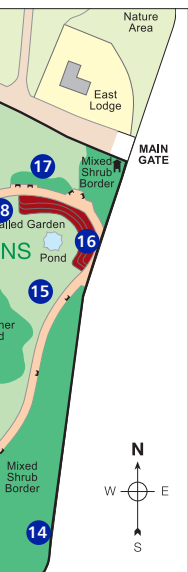
Walk towards the direction of the benches, the tree directly to the left of the Cairn is a **Golden Indian Bean, Catalpa bignonioides**

'Aurea' ②, a deciduous tree that loses all its leaves in winter and has heart shaped leaves.



Golden Indian Bean

The flowers open in June and July and the fruits which can be seen in the autumn are long, thin pods hence, its common name.



Take the pathway which leads to the right. A few yards along, the tall tree on the right hand side with curious fan shaped leaves is a **Maidenhair Tree, Ginkgo biloba** ③.

The tree is one of the oldest specimens in Great Britain today and interestingly the only representative of a type of plant that was widespread in

prehistoric times. Doctor Fothergill planted the Ginkgo in 1763 and as it grew it rested against the side of his house; this is evident today as one side of the trunk appears flatter.



Fothergill's Ginkgo

Opposite the Ginkgo you will find a classic example of a native tree, the **English Oak, *Quercus pendunculata (Syn robur)*** ④. This tree, planted in 1887 is the more common of the two native British Oaks and has an extremely long life span, possibly up to 800 years or more. Throughout history this species has been particularly valuable for timber, especially in ship building before the industrial revolution.

Continue on this path towards the Iris Garden. The large tree, set on the grass to the right closest to the flagpole is a

False Acacia, Robinia pseudoacacia 'Frisia' ⑤.

Originating from the Appalachian Mountains in North America, this tree is from the same family as the pea! Notice the light green



False Acacia

rounded leaves which are a common sight in city streets and parks in the south of England.



To the left of the Robinia, next to the fence there is another large tree, the **Purple Sycamore, *Acer pseudoplatanus* 'Atropurpureum'** ⑥. The leaves appear dark green from above and purple underneath. The fruit have wings and can be seen in the summer months.



Cider Gum

Follow the pathway around to the left past the Iris Garden. Positioned on the left there is a large **Mulberry, *Morus nigra*** ⑦. The fruits of the Mulberry tree are used in jam and wine making. Mulberry trees are often crooked, and occasionally low and domed and this is true with this specimen, as over the years the heavy limbs have needed support by wooden posts. Please note, the Mulberry is best seen from the Rose Garden.

Proceed ahead along the Terrace and walk past the Rose Garden. Towards the end of the Terrace on the left, there is a **Monkey Puzzle Tree, *Araucaria araucana*** ⑧, an evergreen conifer, native to Chile and



Monkey Puzzle Tree

Argentina and grown as an ornamental in Europe and North America. The foliage is composed of large thick, prickly, leaf like scales. The bark is wrinkled and marked with 'rings' formed by old branch scars.



Further along on the other side of the path, at the corner of the tennis court fence there is a **Cider Gum, *Eucalyptus gunnii*** ⑨. This tree is native to Tasmania but cultivated as an ornamental tree for European gardens. The bark is one of the trees most attractive features as it is smooth, peeling back to expose almost white wood which ages to dark brownish grey. The young foliage is often used in flower arranging.

Turn right at the tree sculpture and follow the pathway towards Portway Gate. On the right side, by the perimeter of the tennis court fence there is a large **Bishop Pine, *Pinus muricata*** ⑩. This tree is native to the coast of California and occasionally felled for timber. The needles are hard, deep glossy green in colour and arranged in pairs.

Opposite the Pine, on the other side of the lawn, next to the pathway is a **Field Maple, *Acer campestre*** ⑪. This tree is native to Europe, including Britain and is particularly eye catching in autumn when the leaves turn golden yellow to red.

Walk back to the tree sculpture and take the path leading straight ahead towards the Bridge. Look to the left and you will see a pair of **Copper Beech, *Fagus sylvatica purpurea*** ⑫. This species can be viewed at its best as you walk alongside the Bog Garden. The dark purple leaves contrast with the surrounding trees. The flowers and fruit also have a pinkish brown tint.



Copper Beech

Carry on along this pathway, past the Bridge and the Azalea and Rhododendron Bed until you come to a grassy mound on the left, which is the location for another variety of Beech **Common Beech**, *Fagus sylvatica* 13.



Common Beech

Bark of the London Plane



This tree is native to England and is cultivated throughout Europe for timber, ornamental value and shade. The edible nuts are a source of oil, which was extracted on a large scale in Germany during the World Wars. The leaves have 5-9 pairs of veins and the bark is smooth and grey.

Pause here on this path which leads around the Common Beech. On the right, through a clearing

adjacent to the Common Beech in the mixed border, we can see a good example of one of the most common trees which line the streets of London. The **London Plane**, *Platanus x hispanica* 14. This tree is largely planted in city centres due to its pollution resistant bark which is distinctive, peeling off in flakes leaving lighter, smooth bark underneath.

Tree Trail

Follow the path veering right to walk alongside the perimeter of the gardens until the Walled Garden and Pond is in view. To the left of the pathway, positioned on the slope is a **Contorted Willow, *Salix***

babylonica

'Tortuosa' 15. Notice how the twigs and leaves are curiously twisted and curled compared to the regular Willow adjacent.



Oak Leaved Hornbeam



The Silver Birch, *Betula pendula*

Adjacent to the pond on the left side of the path is the ***Carpinus betulus*** **'Quercifolia' - Oak Leaved Hornbeam 16**.

This is an unusual and rare form of hornbeam which grows two different types of leaf on the same branch, one of which looks like oak leaves and the other that looks like hornbeam.

Walk around the Walled Garden, and past the Pergola. Behind the Spring Bed, on the right, there is an **Ornamental Cherry, *Prunus*** **'Kursar' 17**. Look out for the tree's pretty dark pink flowers in early spring and the superb autumn colour.

Stroll forward along this pathway, past the

benches. Notice the unusual tree with drooping branches on the left, **Weeping Ash, *Fraxinus excelsior*, 'Pendula'** 18. The leaves have 9 -11 leaflets which turn yellow in autumn.

Continue on this route until you come to a cross path. Take the path on the right which leads left towards the Rock Garden. On the corner, on the right, there is a smaller tree with drooping branches, the **Silver Birch, *Betula pendula*** 19. This species is often planted in parks and gardens due to its graceful pendulous form. Silver Birch is easily identifiable by the bark which is white with thin horizontal lines.



Tulip Tree leaf

Proceed ahead on this path and adjacent to the Birch is another species which has distinctive shaped leaves, the **Tulip Tree, *Liriodendron tulipifera*** 20 a deciduous tree and native to Eastern Europe.

The leaves have 4 lobes and turn yellow and orange in the autumn months.

Follow this path until you reach the Rock Garden. On the left there is an established **Turkey Oak, *Quercus cerris*** 21 .



Evergreen Magnolia

As you walk past the Rock Garden, take note of the magnificent **Bull Bay Evergreen Magnolia, *Magnolia grandiflora*** 22 . The fragrant flowers are open July through to September and the leaves

are glossy and thick.

Remain on this path, ahead you will see an **Olive Tree, *Olea europaea*** 23 which is a species of small tree from the family Oleaceae, native to coastal areas of the Eastern



Olive Tree

Mediterranean region.

Stop in between the Olive Tree and bench, look to the right to view the following three trees from this path. The first is a small tree planted for the Lady Mayoress in 2007. **The**

Handkerchief Tree, *Davidia involucrata* 24. Native to

China, this deciduous tree has distinctive flowers, which hang like handkerchiefs and open in May. The leaves are bright, light green and are fragrant when they first unfold.

Behind this tree, to the right, there is a small **Sycamore Japanese Maple, *Acer pseudoplatanus* 'Brilliantissimum'** 25.

A slow-growing deciduous spreading tree with lobed leaves which are salmon pink when young, then turn yellow and

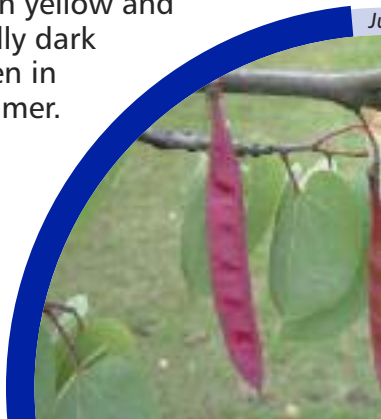
finally dark green in summer.



Handkerchief Tree



Japanese Maple



Next to the Acer on the left, is a very large **Evergreen Oak, *Quercus x hispanica* 'Crispa'** 26. The glossy dark green foliage appears dense due to the abundance of leaves.

Sweet Gums, *Liquidambar*



Evergreen Oak

The acorns fall in October and after a good summer there is usually a heavy crop.

Keep to the path by the Olive. Follow the path round to the right until you reach the Rose Garden and bedding displays.

On the left of the path, there is a **Judas Tree, *Cercis siliquastrum*** 27, native to the Mediterranean and Southern Europe. This tree can be identified by the fruits which are about 10cm long, and often a bright rosy purple colour in the summer.

Take time to explore other interesting trees both in the Ornamental Gardens and around the rest of the Park.

Judas Tree, *Cercis siliquastrum*



We hope you have enjoyed the variety of trees on this trail.

**End of
Tree Trail.**



WEST HAM PARK

West Ham Park is one of a number of parks, gardens and open spaces around London owned and managed by the City of London as part of its commitment to sustaining a world class city. Each open space is a unique resource managed for the use and enjoyment of the public and for the conservation of wildlife and historic landscape. A full list of sites and visitor information can be found on our website at: www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/openspaces or by contacting the City Corporation's Open Spaces on **020 7332 3505** for **general enquiries**.



For further information please contact:

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Would you like to be more involved with the Park, go to our "Friends of West Ham Park" website fwhp.co.uk

Whilst in the Park, do not hesitate to approach any of our staff, who will be happy to assist you.

**If you require this leaflet in another format please contact
020 8472 3584**



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