

# THE TREES OF HORSHAM PARK



The HORSHAM SOCIETY "Town Trail" series; no. 6

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# THE TREES OF HORSHAM PARK

SECOND EDITION 1997

A guide to the species, their  
identification and location in the Park

compiled by  
Members of the Horsham Society

## FOREWORD

In 1927 Horsham Urban Council purchased Park House and adjacent parkland. The Park was gradually developed and nurtured to provide the people of Horsham with an attractive area for leisure and relaxation. In 1974 Horsham District Council was formed and has carried on this good work, for the park is indeed a beautiful oasis covering 56 acres within the town of Horsham. We hope that as you walk around the park you will have a chance to enjoy the results of this work and planning and whilst admiring the lovely trees, you will pause for a while and rest in the scented Park House garden then take a stroll to the pond and see the water fowl enjoying the shade of the Weeping Willows. If children are with you on the walk let them play in the children's play-area where they will also notice the recently planted young trees. Then carry on and enjoy the quiet walkways and paths around the rest of the Park.

The aim of this booklet is to help you identify the trees throughout the different seasons of the year and provide some general information about each of the trees growing here. On the centre pages there is a map of the park showing where each of the trees are located and we hope that by the end of your visit you will share our appreciation of the variety and appeal of these trees and the natural beauty they provide.

Mr Dennis Salt, Chairman of the Horsham Society would like to thank Evan Giles and Alex Lickley of Horsham District Council's Park Services Section for their technical help and guidance in the preparation of this book.

Cover Photograph: The new entrance to Horsham Park from North Street

## INTRODUCTION

The Horsham area is traditionally known for trees which grow best on the acidic Wealden clay and sandy soils and therefore some of the older trees in Horsham Park are the Oak and Scots Pine which flourish in these soils.

The first plants to establish themselves on acidic soil are the mosses, bracken and heather but these are soon displaced by bramble and short lived trees such as Elder, Birch and Hawthorn. In turn these are succeeded by more vigorous trees such as Scots Pine and Oaks, although the saplings can be easily destroyed by grazing animals if they are not protected. Once the young Oak is established, its dense leaf canopy shuts out light and inhibits the growth of its competitors, completing a cycle known as the Wealden Succession. You will be able to see all the trees involved in this cycle during the tour.

Extensive tree planting, beginning over a century ago, means that the park is home to a wide variety of interesting and exotic trees such as the Atlas Cedar, Wellingtonia or Giant Redwood, London Plane and Tulip Trees. The great storm of October 1987 caused the loss of many mature trees in the Park. However, this provided Horsham District Council with further opportunity to introduce new species to the area and the selection includes many unusual varieties including a Japanese Cherry believed to be extinct until it was re-discovered in a Sussex garden.

The trees on the following pages are all found in Horsham Park. The map on pages 9 & 10 marks their position. The trees described include recent plantings as well as the mature trees which are up to 300 years old.

## Corsican Pine

*Pinus nigra*

A native of Central Europe, this tree has a black scaly and ridged bark, growing up to 40 metres tall. Its needle-like leaves are 15cm long, sharp pointed and grey-green in colour. Small brown cones (8cm) are borne singly or in clusters. This species is more tolerant of Horsham's clay soils than its relative, the Scots Pine.

## Cricket Bat Willow

*Salix caerulea*

A native of Europe and West Asia, trees can grow to 25 metres tall. The bark is grey-brown and deeply fissured. Leaves are slender and pointed - green above and grey or blue-green beneath. Timber from this species is used for making Cricket Bats, because of its particular qualities.

## Deodar

*Cedrus deodara*

This tree is a native of the Western Himalayas. It has longer leaves (needles) than other cedars and a more pendulous shape around a single dark-grey trunk which cracks vertically with age. Towards the end of Summer a fresh crop of needles is produced, the pale green contrasting with the dark green of the previous year's growth. In their native environment the trees have grown to 70 metres tall, though 50 metres is more likely in Great Britain.

## Elm

*Ulmus procera*

A native of Southern Britain which can grow to 30 metres tall in 100 years, it has a smooth, ridged, pale grey bark; densely hairy shoots, leaf stalks and stiff hairy leaves that feel like sandpaper. The flowers open in February or March and the fruits are fully developed in apple green bunches well before the bright green pleated leaves unfold. In June the fruits turn pale brown and fall in July. As the trees mature, they become more susceptible to Dutch Elm Disease, which is still prevalent in West Sussex.



## Evergreen Magnolia

A native of South Eastern USA it can be recognised by the large clumps of dark green glossy leaves. In late Summer, up to October, large tulip shaped whitish-yellow flowers may be seen sprouting terminally from the upper branches. When fully open these flowers can measure up to 25 cm across.

*Magnolia grandiflora*



## Evergreen Oak

This broad spreading tree, sometimes known as Holm Oak, is a native of the Mediterranean and grows to 30 metres tall. It has a rough cracking bark that is nearly black, and glossy dark green elliptical leaves that are grey and hairy underneath. In early summer there are drooping catkins followed by acorns. A fine specimen tree for parks and large gardens.

*Quercus ilex*

## Fastigate Oak or Cypress Oak

A large imposing tree of columnar shape. This is a selected form of English Oak grafted onto Common Oak rootstock with a narrow silhouette, good as an avenue tree.

*Quercus robur* "Fastigiata"

## Foxglove Tree



*Paulownia tomentosa*

This tree is a native of China and grows to 15 metres tall. The bark is smooth and grey, and the leaves are heart-shaped, dark green and hairy. Purple trumpet-shaped flowers appear in clusters in Spring.

## Golden Rain Tree, Pride of India

A native of China and Korea, this broad spreading tree with a pale brown, shallowly fissured bark, grows to 12 metres tall. It has small (10cm) leaves with toothed edges and flowers mid to late Summer. The fruit consists of triangular-shaped, three-sided green or green tinged red fruit capsules, ripening to pale brown.

*Koelreuteria paniculata*

## Great White Cherry

*Prunus "Tai Haku"*

This Japanese ornamental flowering cherry has large white flowers with pink stamens opening mid-spring amongst bronzy leaves. Once thought extinct, it was re-discovered in a Sussex garden and re-introduced to Japan.

## Hawthorn or May

*Crataegus monogyna*

A native to Britain, it is covered all over with scented flowers in May, and provides birds such as redwing and fieldfares with great quantities of dark red berries in October. Trees grow to 12 metres high in 50 years, but many Hawthorns are found around fields as thorny cattle-proof hedges.

## Himalayan Birch

*Betula utilis*

A native of China, trees have a creamy-white or dark coppery-brown peeling bark. The leaves are glossy green, toothed and tape-pointed. Catkins are either yellow and drooping, or green and upright (female). Trees can grow to 25 metres high, and produce a pleasant dappled shade.

## Holly

*Ilex aquifolium*

An evergreen native of Britain, its leaves are crinkled and spined at lower level, and elliptical without teeth higher up. Every year female trees produce red berries which, if not eaten by birds such as fieldfare, remain until the following May. Holly trees can grow to 20 metres high. Some species of Holly are variegated with yellow-cream margins on the leaves. This species thrives in Horsham Park, to the extent that there is a programme to ensure its growth is controlled.

## Hornbeam

*Carpinus betulus*

A native of Britain, the Hornbeam is a densely branched and broadly spreading tree with a smooth fluted pale grey bark, similar to the Beech, and serrated Elm-like leaves. Green pendant catkins are borne on the previous year's twigs. Small nut-like fruits hang below the branches in sprays. The name Hornbeam means "hard wood" and is one of the hardest and strongest woods. Although the tree can grow to 30 metres, many are used as hedges or for decorative shapes.

## Horse Chestnut

A native of the Balkans and growing to 30 metres tall the Horse Chestnut is one of the largest flowering trees. Its leaves and flowerheads begin to expand late in March, although some individual trees can be as late as the end of April. The flowers open in May with white petals, tinged and blotched with pink and yellow. The fruit is the conker.

*Aesculus hippocastanum*



## Hybrid Larch

Trees grow up to 35 metres tall with a reddish-brown scaly bark. Branches have soft needle-like green leaves and brown upright cones. This is a deciduous conifer widely planted in forestry for timber.

*Larix x eurolepis*

## Indian Bean Tree

A native of the USA, it is a most decorative tree which can grow to a height of 15 metres, it is characterised at a glance by its large, pale green leaves 10-25 cm long in whorls of three. The flowers open in July and the fruits resembling long bean pods are up to 40cm long and the seeds they contain each have tufts of white hairs at their apexes. There is a famous row of these trees in Westminster's Parliament Square.

*Catalpa bignonioides*

## Japanese Maple

A native of Japan, this cultivated Maple with long pointed leaves having finely-toothed margins, occurs in many varieties. In Autumn the leaves turn a very bright copper colour before falling. Trees are broadly spreading and can grow to 15 metres tall, although rarely live more than 90 years.

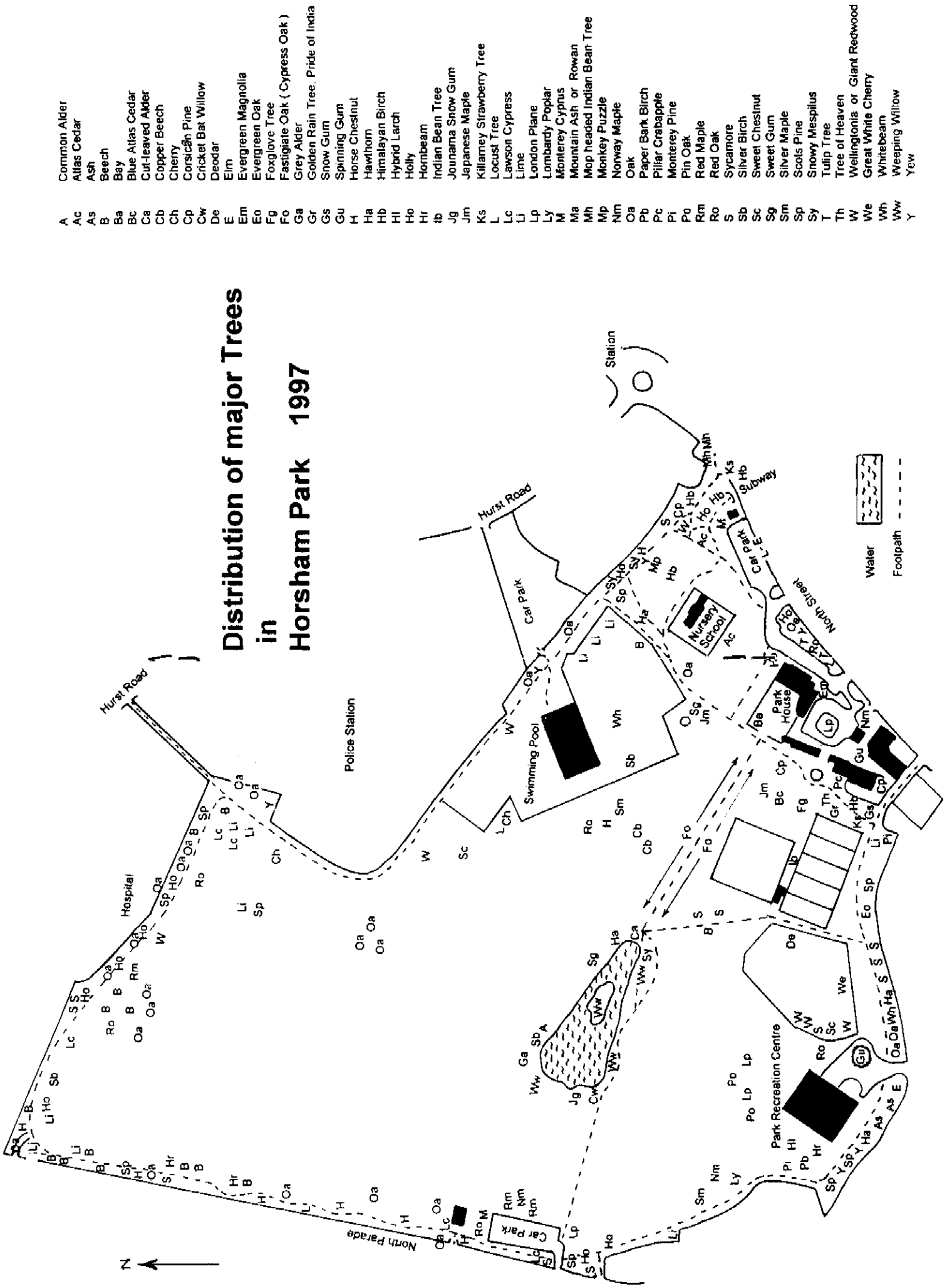
*Acer palmatum*

## Jounama Snow Gum

A native of Australia, this tree has a beautifully patterned bark, a shapely crown, and grows up to 15 metres tall. It is evergreen with glaucous (grey-green) twigs and buds. The large creamy white flowers attract honey bees.

*Eucalyptus debeuzevevillei*

# Distribution of major Trees in Horsham Park 1997





## Killarney Strawberry Tree

*Arbutus unedo*

A native of Southern Ireland and the Mediterranean, it can grow to 11 metres high. It has a reddish-brown fissured bark and dark red branches. In October and November it is at its best when the flowers are out and last year's fruit turns from green to yellow and then scarlet. They are edible but tasteless, hence the latin name *unedo* which roughly translated means "only eaten once"!

## Lawson Cypress

*Chamaecyparis lawsonia*

A native of California, this tall fast-growing evergreen is a narrow conical tree growing to a maximum of 60 metres tall. It has long, ferny flattened scaly leaves and the male flowers are crimson cylindrical structures produced at the tips of the short branches. These trees often get "out of hand" in a garden setting, because of their rampant growth!

## Lime

A native of Britain, its heart shaped leaves do not appear until May. The fragrant yellowish-white flowers are popular with bees and turn to globular fruits by Autumn, remaining after the leaves have been shed. The Lime can grow to 25 metres tall in 120 years. This tree is preferred to the Common Lime *Tilia vulgaris* which drips a sticky honeydew and is subject to aphid attack.

*Tilia platyphyllos*



## Locust Tree

*Robinia pseudoacacia*

A native of America, it is often called Acacia. Its leaves do not open until June, and they fall in September. Unless there is a warm period in June it does not bear many flowers until later. The flowers are white and hanging, sweetly scented and popular with bees. The branches are thorny and brittle.

## Lombardy Poplar

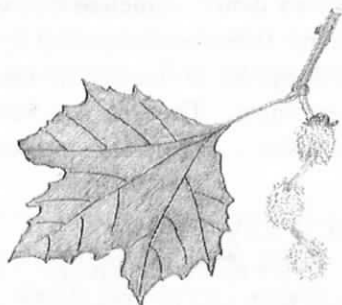
*Populus nigra "Italica"*

A native of Europe and West Asia, these columnar trees grow to 30 metres tall. The bark is coarsely fissured, and the leaves are dark green, tooth-edged, triangular, about 10cm across.

## London Plane

A hybrid growing up to 50 metres tall, it copes with adverse city environments and pollution by shedding a layer of its bark each year, allowing it to “breathe”. The tree is characterized by its fruits, which resemble spiny “ball-and-chain” structures as they hang down from their branches, and the distinctive flaking bark of the trunk.

*Platanus x Hispanica*



## Monkey Puzzle

A native of the Chile-Argentine border and with a grey wrinkled bark, trees grow to 50 metres tall. Long spidery branches have densely overlapping dark green spiny, scale-like leaves. The large globular cones hold over 100 seeds. The tree is an evergreen.

*Araucaria araucana*

## Monterey Cypress

A native of California, trees can grow to 25 metres tall and have a red-brown bark with shallow ridges. Small, dense scale-like leaves and rounded cones with scales ending in a small point identify this broadly conical shaped tree.

*Cupressus macrocarpa*

## Monterey Pine



*Pinus radiata*

A native of California, the tree grows to 30 metres tall, has a deeply fissured dark grey bark. Being a fire climax tree, it holds onto its cones which remain unopened for 20 years or more, their weight causing branches to break. Dense heads of branches with needle-like leaves contain clusters of yellow-brown or red-purple flowers in early Summer.

## Mop Headed Indian Bean Tree *Catalpa x Bungeii*

A native of China, this small tree has white flowers in clusters with purple spots. The distinguishing feature from the Indian Bean Tree is its large leaves, which can grow up to 30cm across.

## Mountain Ash or Rowan

*Sorbus aucuparia*

A very hardy, attractive tree which can grow to a height of 15 metres in 30 years. It can be recognised by its dense clusters of yellowish-white blossom in May, its intricately divided leaves, and its luxuriant scarlet berries in September. The tree was held in high esteem by the Druids and its wood considered a protection against Witchcraft.

## Norway Maple

*Acer platanoides*

A native of Europe and growing up to 25 metres tall, the tree has a smooth grey bark and its flowers have small acid-yellow petals in March or April. In Autumn the leaves turn to a glorious lemon colour before being shed. Seeds are winged and similar to those of the Sycamore.

## Oak

The English Oak in silhouette produces a broad, spreading head of branches up to 35 metres in height, and in a mature tree, the width is greater than its height. The male flowers slender catkins in thin bunches and the female flowers develop into acorns. Oak trees can live for 500 years or more and are very much a part of the Sussex landscape due to the clay soil. The Oak supports in the region of 300 other species of fauna and flora.

*Quercus robur*



## Paper bark Birch

*Betula papyrifera*

A native of North America, the tree which grows up to 30 metres tall, is identified by its white bark peeling in thin layers. The leaves are taper pointed; pale green in Spring, dark green in Summer, turning yellow and orange in Autumn. Catkins appear in Spring.

## Pillar Crabapple

*Malus tschonoskii*

This small tree grows to 15 metres tall and is a native of Japan. It has a rough purple-brown bark and ovate sharply toothed leaves. White flowers with flashes of pink on the five petals in late Spring give way to crabapples 3cm across. Good Autumn colours.

## Pin Oak

*Quercus palustris*

A native of North America this elegant dense-headed tree, which prefers damp soil conditions, grows up to 30 metres tall and has a grey-brown smooth bark. In late Spring, drooping catkins appear. The acorns have shallow saucer-like cups. Good Autumn colours.

## Red Maple

*Acer rubrum*

A native of North America, the Red Maple grows up to 25 metres tall and has distinctive leaves with three or five toothed lobes, dark green in Summer, turning red or yellow in Autumn. Small red flowers appear in Spring.

## Red Oak

*Quercus rubra*

A native of North America, trees grow up to 25 metres tall and are broad spreading with a smooth grey bark becoming furrowed with age. Yellowish-green catkins appear in Spring and its acorns are set in a very shallow cup. The tree has russet Autumn tints.



## Scots Pine

*Pinus sylvestris*

The Scots Pine is distinguished by a richly coloured reddish stem, glaucous grey tone of its foliage, its flattened top and horizontal branches. The lean, scaly trunk rises to a height of up to 35 metres. The fruit is the pine cone and seeds are shed in the Spring having a membranous wing to assist their dispersion. Although it once covered most of the British Isles, it is now more commonly found as a planted or naturalised tree, except in parts of Scotland and Northern Ireland. There are many examples in St. Leonards Forest.

## Silver Birch

*Betula pendula*

A native of Britain, the Silver Birch grows quickly when young to a height of 20 metres in 25 years. Few trees live beyond 60 years. The leaves are triangular in shape with long points and the flowers are catkins which may be found in late Summer at the tips of the twigs, growing next Spring and releasing clouds of pollen. Female catkins develop into tiny nuts by September, providing food for tits and other small birds.

## Silver Maple

*Acer saccharinum*

A native of North America, this fast-growing tree grows up to 30 metres tall and has a smooth bark. The five-lobed leaves have silvery undersides and create a delightful effect when ruffled by the wind. Good Autumn colour.

## Snow Gum

*Eucalyptus niphophila*

A native of Australia, this slender, broadly spreading tree grows to 15 metres tall and has a grey and white bark likened to a Python's skin, peeling in large flakes. Long leathery grey evergreen leaves have white flower clusters in Summer.

## Snowy Mespilus

*Amelanchier canadensis*

This small tree or shrub is a native of North America. It has tall erect stems and oblong leaves, showy white flowers in Spring and good Autumn colours.

## Spinning Gum

*Eucalyptus perriniana*

A native of Australia, the Spinning Gum grows to 7 metres tall and has a grey and brown peeling bark. Withered juvenile leaves form spinning disks, the adult leaves being long and pointed-purple, becoming deep blue-green.

## Sweet Chestnut

*Castanea sativa*

A native of North Africa, the Sweet Chestnut is in the same family as the Beech and Oak. The tree may be recognised by its rich green, elliptical, sharply-toothed leaves, the spiralling knurled bark of the trunk, and by its very prickly spiny fruits which contain nuts. Trees grow to 35 metres high in 90 years, but are often coppiced.



## Sweet Gum

These broadly conical trees with a dark grey-brown, deeply furrowed bark, grow to 40 metres tall and have five-pointed maple-like leaves. The flowers open in May, the female developing into globular fruiting clusters hanging down on long stalks. In Autumn, the red and scarlet leaves persist on the tree. In Winter, the corky bark of older twigs is often a feature.

*Liquidambar styraciflua*



## Sycamore

A native of mid-Europe, this is a long lived tree with a pinkish to yellowish grey bark, peeling in irregular plates, and grows up to 30 metres. The leathery leaves and branches are arranged in opposite pairs. The Winter buds are green and show distinctly the outline of their separate scales. The leaves have five round lobes, each with a prominent central vein. Greenish-yellow flowers hang in dense catkin-like panicles which open in April. Copious winged seeds are dispersed over a wide area and the tree can become a weed problem.

*Acer pseudoplatanus*

## Tree of Heaven

A native of China, this exotic tree grows to 25 metres in 55 years. The leaves unfold very late in the season, by the end of June and fall early without colouring. The female bears many bunches of fruit, scarlet in late Summer, turning brown in Winter. The tree has many root suckers.

*Ailanthus glandulosa*

## Tulip Tree

A native of the USA, trees grow up to 40 metres tall in 60 years. Tulip Trees belong to the Magnolia family and the flowers, produced in June/July, have numerous orange stamens which spill over the greenish-white petals. In Autumn, the leaves turn gold and pale orange. The seed pods resemble fir cones.

*Liriodendron tulipifera*

## Weeping Willow

*Salix babylonica*

Of Chinese origin, the shoots are yellow, becoming brighter after the new year and at their best in March, when the leaf buds are unfolding bright green. Catkins open with the leaves. Trees grow to 12 metres tall and are broadly weeping in appearance, the grey-brown bark being fissured into rough, vertical ridges. These trees are commonly planted near water.

## Wellingtonia or Giant Redwood *sequoiadendron giganteum*

A narrow conical evergreen reaching to a height of 40 metres in 50 years and can live to 5,000 years, the tallest being 105 metres with a trunk diameter exceeding 9 metres. The spongy fibrous bark of the trunk is reddish-brown, which gradually becomes fluted with age and is home to tree creepers. The leaves, which appear in dense clusters of branchlets, are scale-like and triangular in cross-section. The cones consist of thick, transversely grooved scales. The tree, which is a native of USA is named in honour of the Duke of Wellington and was first introduced into England in 1853.



## Whitebeam

*Sorbus aria*

A native of Southern England, this tree gets its name from the white undersides of its leaves, which are covered in hair, giving a silvery appearance to the whole tree as they burst forth in early Spring. The cream-coloured flowers, which appear in May or June, are gathered in loose clusters and these are succeeded in the Autumn by ovoid scarlet berries. Trees grow to 15 metres high in 80 years with a grey bark that develops rugged cracks with age.

## Yew

*Taxus baccata*

Yew trees are among the longest living trees, often thousands of years old and growing to a height of up to 20 metres. The red berries and evergreen foliage are very poisonous to people and many animals, but the berries are eaten by birds. The bark is purple-brown, smooth and flaking. The Yew is often planted in Churchyards to give shelter.

# THE HORSHAM SOCIETY

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# **The Horsham Society**

**Founded 1955**

The Society is an independent charity (No. 268949) registered with The Civic Trust and affiliated to the Council for the Preservation of Rural England.

The objects of the Society are:-

To stimulate public interest in Horsham, its history, geography, natural history and architecture;

To promote high standards of planning and architecture in Horsham;

To secure the preservation, protection, development and improvement of features of historic and public interest in Horsham and in the wider community when matters affect the town.

Horsham Society is the main organisation in the town which is concerned to protect its amenities whether historic or modern building, open spaces, vegetation, or a balance between old and new.

We oppose thoughtless or haphazard development; proliferating, confusing or unsightly signs; neglect of buildings; mutilation of trees above and below the surface; and similar thoughtless irresponsibility.

If you consider joining us or wish to know more about the Society please write to:

The Membership Secretary  
Horsham Society,  
c/o Black Horse Agencies  
34, South Street  
Horsham

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