



Cover image from an original painting
by local artist John Stillman RSM
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We all value Beddington Park and know how much it has to offer, but would you like to find out about some of its most significant, beautiful and unusual trees?

This tree trail has been put together by the Tree Wardens in Beddington Park to explain a bit more about trees of particular interest in the park. They can all be visited on a 30-40 min stroll (with the added physical and mental benefits that walking brings).

With the exception of the Red oak, the level trail is accessible to wheelchair users and buggies (with a small diversion, marked on the map), so why not go on the walk today and discover some fascinating tree facts!

Beddington Park Tree Wardens

The Tree Wardens are a volunteer team who provide support on tree related matters in Beddington Park. They carry out routine tree maintenance, monitor for pests and diseases, lead tree planting events and more. There are ongoing learning and training opportunities and the scheme offers flexible involvement. If you are interested in joining the Tree Wardens get in touch today.

Email: beddingtonparktreewardens@gmail.com

**This trail was created by the
Beddington Park Tree Wardens with support from
Sutton Neighbourhood Services.**

For any tree enquiries please call
020 8770 5000 and ask to speak to a
member of the council tree team.

Or please write to:

The Tree Team
London Borough of Sutton
24 Denmark Road
Carshalton SM5 2JG

Twitter: @beddington_park

Website: www.sutton.gov.uk/parks



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Beddington Park Tree Trail





Black Ash

Fraxinus nigra

Leaves are compound – made up of multiple leaflets – growing in opposite pairs. Seeds are winged and grow in bunches called ash “keys”. Distinct black buds help with winter identification.



Common Lime

Tilia x europaea

Common lime trees form two splendid avenues in the park, south of the lake. The leaves are heart shaped with an asymmetrically lobed base. Groups of small white flowers grow with long narrow bracts (leaf of the flower) and become small round fruits. Winter buds are pink and rounded.



Sycamore

Acer pseudoplatanus

Part of the maple family, its leaves are palmately lobed, with 5 points and a coarsely serrated edge. They grow in opposite pairs. The seeds are held in paired wings which are roughly at a 90 degree angle.

Horse Chestnut

Aesculus hippocastanum

The large leaves are compound, with leaflets growing palmately (from the same central point). The white/pink flowers grow in upright branching clusters that look a bit like candelabras. The seeds, better known as conkers, grow in a leathery spikey case. Winter buds are large, brown and sticky.



Beech

Fagus sylvatica

Young leaves are lime green and hairy but mature to dark waxy leaves, oval in shape with wavy edges. The seeds are contained in a woody, softly-spiked case. Winter buds are long and sharply pointed.



Field Maple

Acer campestre

The only native maple to the UK. Like the sycamore the leaves grow in opposite pairs, with 5 lobes, but the lobes are less serrated and more rounded. The seeds are also winged but grow in opposite directions – almost 180 degrees.



English Oak

Quercus robur

The leaves are deeply lobed with smooth rounded edges and grow almost in bunches, with little to no stems. Yellow catkins give rise to cupped seeds known as acorns.



London Plane

Orientalis x hispanica

Large palmately lobed leaves resembling that of a maple. Spiky/hairy looking seed balls hang on long stems long into the winter. The balls are made up of clusters of seeds that break up to disperse. The trunk is distinctive for its patchy, shedding bark.



Common Alder

Alnus glutinosa

Commonly found near rivers and lakes, as it thrives in moist ground. The dark green leaves are racquet shaped, shiny and leathery. They are often indented at the “tip”. An identifying feature is the presence of both long catkins and “cones” (short dense catkins) which are the male and female flowers respectively. Cones can be spotted on the tree all year round.



1. Red Oak *Quercus rubra*

A striking specimen, standing proud in an elevated and open location. This broadleaf deciduous tree, native to North America, is truly beautiful. Its large, dark green, pointed leaves change to an attractive bright red in autumn. Like other oaks it provides much food for wildlife. The male catkin flowers provide pollen for bees and other insects in spring, and the acorns, dropped in the autumn, are eaten by birds and small mammals. This example has a particularly wonderful shape thanks to its broad canopy.



2. Giant Redwood *Sequoiadendron giganteum*

The Giant Redwood or Sequoia is native to North America where it thrives in the moist, humid climate of the Californian coast. The attractive, cinnamon-coloured bark is fire proof and grows up to 60cm thick. The tree itself can grow up to 100m tall, live 3,000 years and has branches up to 1½m in diameter. The largest tree in the world, by volume, is a Giant Redwood. It was introduced to the UK in the 1850s and, although difficult to age, there is a reasonable likelihood that this Giant Redwood was planted by Alfred Smee (who created the Grange Garden) in around the 1860s/1870s.



3. Indian Bean Tree *Catalpa bignonioides*

Contrary to its name, this tree is native to North America and arrived in the UK in the 1700s. The name derives from its association with Native Americans. The Indian bean tree provides interest much later into the summer season than most trees. Its large heart shaped leaves are late to appear and, quite unusually, produce nectar. It bears beautiful clusters of bell-shaped white flowers from mid-July. Perhaps most distinctive are its long brown "bean" pods which appear after the flowers and hold on throughout winter.



4. Caucasian Wingnut *Pterocarya fraxinifolia*

Wingnuts are large, fast growing trees native to Iran and introduced to Britain in the 1780s. They can grow to over 20m tall with an often larger spread due to their almost unique, multi-stemmed habit, with several main branches arching up from near ground level as this specimen has done, spectacularly. It is from the same family as the walnut. It takes its name from the attractive string of winged nuts that develop in the late summer. In Iran it can be found growing by rivers, which may explain why this specimen is doing so well, given its location by a stream.

Beddington Park Tree Trail



6. Paperbark Birch *Betula papyrifera*

A beautiful and striking tree, thanks to its distinctive, gleaming white bark. It is often planted to add visual interest and beauty to a landscape and it certainly does that here, contrasting with the green and brown around it. The name is derived from the nature of its bark which peels in thin paper-like layers. The tree produces short brown (female) and long green (male) catkins in April/May. Its seeds are very small, smooth and oval in shape, nestled between two wings. In autumn the tree provides bright yellow colour.



7. Tulip Tree *Liriodendron tulipifera*

The Tulip tree is native to North-East America, where it was often used to make canoes. It is an attractive tree with really distinct and unusual four lobed leaves which turn golden yellow and brown in autumn. The tree bears attractive, individual large flowers, usually blooming in June, which are yellow and orange and resemble the shape of a tulip. It has shown a remarkable tolerance to pollution making it increasingly popular in the urban environment.



8. Ginkgo *Ginkgo biloba*

Ginkgo (from the Japanese Ginkyo, meaning silver apricot) is a living fossil. It is sometimes called a Maidenhair tree. Neither a conifer nor a broadleaf, it is the only remaining living species in the division Ginkgophyta, with fossils dating back 270million years. The tree is deciduous and can live as long as 3000 years. Its fan-shaped "Bilobed" leaves turn a bright yellow in autumn. The female tree bears extremely unpleasantly scented round yellow fruits, although its seeds are a delicacy in China, its country of origin.



9. Dawn Redwood *Metasequoia glyptostroboides*

Relative of the Giant Redwood, this conifer is unusual largely due to it being deciduous. It is one of just 14 species of conifer that are not evergreen, instead dropping its leaves in the autumn. As a result it turns a gorgeous orange colour, like the colour of dawn. Its new growth consists of dark soft needles that grow in opposite pairs. The dawn redwood was thought to be extinct until it was rediscovered in China in the 1940s, with the first recorded planting of a Dawn Redwood in the UK in 1949. As such, we know that this tree cannot have been planted before then. As a fast growing tree, it is likely it was planted much later.



10. Sweet Chestnut *Castanea sativa*

Not an unusual tree by any stretch, but this tree is a contender for oldest tree in the park! We do not know its age, but it is depicted in a photo from 1853, in which it is a fair size already. Not to be mistaken with the surrounding horse chestnuts - the two trees are completely unrelated. Its leaves are long and sharply toothed with prominent veins. Unlike conkers, the sweet chestnut is edible, if you can beat the squirrels!



11. Zelkova *Zelkova Serrata*

Whilst the main parkland is largely home to common varieties of tree, lining a path alongside ashes and horse chestnuts stands a wonderful example of a Zelkova. It is from the same family as our declining native elm and is often called a Japanese elm. This tree has a fabulous shape, thanks to its characteristic broad canopy, and is often grown as an ornamental tree. The oblong leaves are neatly serrated and the bark sheds in areas to reveal orange patches. Perhaps one of its best qualities is its brilliant autumn colour, turning a beautiful mix of deep oranges and reds.

"Alfred Smee created the Grange Garden in the 1860s"



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