

## Tree Walk No. 3

10th August 2017

Graham Pearce



## FRIENDS OF WOLLATON PARK

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#### 1. Manna Ash, *Fraxinus ornus*

Southern Europe, introduced to Britain pre-1700. Attractive plumes of flowers in late May are fragrant, smelling of new-mown hay. It is insect-pollinated, unlike most ash trees. The main leaf-stalk is kinked, with stalked leaflets. A sugary exudation of sap is one form of “manna”.



#### 2. Common Hornbeam, *Carpinus betulus*

Strictly native to Britain only in southern England. Often confused with Common Beech, likewise used for hedging, but the leaves are rougher, more veined and with serrated margins. The bunches of nutlets with lobed bracts and the generally oval trunk and fluted bark are highly distinctive. The wood is one of the hardest known.

#### 3. Norway Maple, *Acer platanoides*

Widespread in Continental Europe and first recorded as growing in Britain in Scotland in 1683. Commonly planted as a street tree, it is potentially capable of reaching 30 m (100 ft) in height. The ridged bark and the leaves' pointed lobes help to distinguish it from the Sycamore. Like the native Field Maple (*A. campestre*), it has milky sap.

#### 4. Single-leaved Ash, *Fraxinus excelsior* forma *diversifolia*

This unusual natural variant of our native Common Ash is puzzling at first but easily recognised from the black buds and opposite leaves and when, in some years, it is festooned with typical ash keys. A weeping form is also available commercially.

#### 5. Cypress Oak, *Quercus robur* 'Fastigiata'

Another unusual form of a native tree, of very upright growth habit, useful for planting in narrow spaces. It is usually raised from seed, so individual specimens vary in compactness, but the best cultivars such as 'Koster' are maintained by grafting.

#### 6. Silver Maple, *Acer saccharinum*

Eastern North America, 1725. The fastest-growing American maple, which yields small quantities of maple syrup, but should not be confused with the true Sugar Maple, *A. saccharum*. Silver undersides of the yellow and red leaves add to the mosaic effect when they carpet the ground in autumn. Decorative bird's-eye maple wood is produced in some stems.

#### 7. Scots Pine, *Pinus sylvestris*

Native and naturalised in Britain and very wide-ranging in Europe and northern Asia. A 2-needle pine, one of the hardest and heaviest of the so-called softwoods, once used for railway sleepers, it is known as Yellow or Red Deal in the timber trade.

#### 8. White Poplar, *Populus alba*

This possibly native or introduced Eurasian species typically has persistent white undersides to the leaves, which on strong shoots are lobed and maple-like. The similar Grey Poplar, *P. x canescens*, a hybrid with our native Aspen, *P. tremula*, has greyish, wavy-edged leaves.

#### 9. Lombardy Poplar, *Populus nigra* 'Italica'

Introduced to Britain in 1758, this male tree probably arose as an Italian sport of an Asian race of the Black Poplar. The familiar vertical (fastigate) branching pattern is practically diagnostic, though there are some minor clonal and hybrid variants.

#### 10. Alders, *Alnus*

Three species grow around the Lake. Our native Common Alder, *A. glutinosa*, is readily identified by the flat, racquet-shaped leaves and persistent cones. Grey Alder, *A. incana*, a widespread European species introduced to Britain in 1780, has mainly smooth, grey bark, and pointed leaves, grey-downy on the underside. Italian Alder, *A. cordata*, introduced in 1820, has a narrow, upright growth habit, heart-shaped leaves and large cones.

#### 11. Willows, *Salix*

The Willow Enclosure (edged with poplars) was originally planted in the 1980s with a range of species from Attenborough Nature Reserve. Predominant around the Lake are the Crack Willow, *S. fragilis*, and White Willow, *S. alba*, which has more silky-hairy leaves, especially noticeable on the undersides when disturbed by the wind.

#### 12. Horse Chestnuts, *Aesculus*

Queen Elizabeth Walk, planted in 1980 to mark the 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday of the Queen Mother, alternates two varieties: Red Horse Chestnut, *Aesculus x carnea* 'Briotii', and *A. hippocastanum* 'Baumannii', which has double flowers that don't produce conkers. Recent problems with the Horse Chestnut Leaf Miner insect, and a Bleeding Canker condition have ravaged many of these trees.



#### 13. Common Yew, *Taxus baccata*

A familiar native conifer well-known for its longevity and its association with churches and graveyards. Most parts are poisonous but it has some valuable medicinal properties. Yew wood, usually imported from Spain or Italy, was favoured for medieval longbows. This tree is estimated to be a little over 300 years old.

#### 14. Douglas Fir, *Pseudotsuga menziesii*

From Western North America, 1827, where it can exceed 120 m in height, and reaches over 60 m in Britain. A fast-growing, plantation tree, the world's most important source of plywood, with many other uses for timber. The buds are beech-like, the foliage has a lemony scent and the cones are unmistakable for bearing 3-pronged bracts.

#### 15. Hybrid Black Poplar, *Populus x canadensis*

One of many varieties of the cross between our native Black Poplar (*P. nigra*) and North American Eastern Cottonwood (*P. deltoides*), noted for their hybrid vigour and productivity. Just a few massive trees now remain from two groups of three in the Duck Decoy. From the late flushing of the leaves in spring and deeply, regularly fissured bark, this most probably belongs to the male clone 'Serotina'. Others have been planted at the edges of the Willow Enclosure. Also worth noting is the last surviving Balsam Poplar, *Populus balsamifera*, from a small group opposite the reed bed at the eastern end of the Lake.

#### 16. Golden Weeping Willow, *Salix x sepulcralis* var. *chrysocoma*

The golden-yellow, weeping branches are instantly recognisable. It is unusual for a willow in that the catkins are often hermaphrodite, having both male and female flowers. This complex hybrid with some Chinese willow parentage first came into commerce in 1888.

#### 17. Sycamore, *Acer pseudoplatanus*

A species native to hilly regions of southern Europe, but naturalised in Britain since its introduction in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, maybe even earlier. Though troublesome when invasive and dominant, it has a useful timber and some benefits for wildlife. Tar-spot (*Rhytisma acerinum*) disfigures the leaves from mid-August. Fiddle-back sycamore is used for parts of some string instruments.

#### 18. Hybrid Oak, *Quercus x rosacea*

This magnificent specimen, a County Champion, is now well over 500 years old, so predates the building of Wollaton Hall and is the oldest tree in the park. It is regarded as a hybrid between our Common or Pedunculate Oak, *Q. robur*, and our other native species the Sessile Oak, *Q. petraea*. Although it bears male catkins in the spring, over recent years at least it has not produced any acorns.



#### 19. Limes, *Tilia*

Nottingham's most frequent urban tree, the Common Lime, *T. x europaea*, is abundant throughout Wollaton Park, and there are occasional specimens of its parents the Broad-leaved Lime, *T. platyphyllos* and Small-leaved Lime, *T. cordata*. Here there is also an example of the Pendent Silver Lime, *T. tomentosa* 'Petiolaris', one of the most ornamental of all large, weeping trees. The WWII memorial circle of trees nearby includes a pair of the Caucasian or Crimean Lime, *T. x euclora*, with noticeably glossy, dark green leaves.

#### 20. Hungarian Oak, *Quercus frainetto*

Also known as Italian Oak, introduced to Britain in 1837. The neatly radiating branching pattern in the crown, like a half-opened umbrella, and big leaves, deeply divided into lobes, are characteristic. Seldom produces acorns in Britain and then they mostly yield hybrid plants.