

Trees for the Green – large native trees.

An Oak *quercus robur*

English Oak gains around 12" a year and will reach a height and spread of **50 to 60 feet**. It will tolerate a range of soil pH and moisture conditions, including occasionally wet soil and dry clay. It is long-lived and takes at least 20 years to produce any acorns and over 50 years to reach full size. The oak is home to a huge range of insect life which means that of all British trees, it supplies the most food for birds such as Tits and Tree Creepers.



A Chestnut *castanea sativa* A large tree with a stout trunk and strong, fairly short main branches that create a shaggy canopy starting quite close to the ground. Sweet chestnuts, which can reach 30 metres in the right position, will grow on almost any well-drained soil apart from chalk. Spanish chestnuts were hugely important to the Roman



Empire, which was responsible for increasing its range across the Old World and for introducing it to Britain some 2,000 years ago. Sweet chestnut porridge was the staple diet of Roman soldiers on campaign. With our Roman finds maybe something we might consider.

This rugged, deciduous tree has lush, glossy, lance head shaped leaves with serrated edges that turn bronze-gold in autumn. It produces fairly insignificant pale yellow catkins in June/July which are pollinated by bees and ripen into eating chestnuts in early winter. It is an excellent parkland or woodland specimen. It is a very long-lived tree and old specimens can be exceptionally beautiful, with thick, spreading branches and intricately ridge bark which

seems to spiral around the trunk. Deer love chestnuts.

A Beech *fagus sylvatica*

Another fairly large tree growing to between 20 and 40 m and having either green or copper leaves turning orange and gold in the autumn. The smaller fern leaf beech turns gold in the autumn and will reach around 15m. Aftercare for the first three years after planting is vital for beech trees as their roots are shallow.



Trees for the Green - smaller trees.

A Mulberry *Morus nigra*



Not native but probably introduced by the Romans. They used the trees for medicinal purposes, using mulberry leaves to treat diseases of the mouth, trachea and lungs. By the 17th century, people were also using the roots of mulberry trees to get rid of tapeworms. King James I urged the planting of mulberry trees to compete with France in silk making. He, himself, planted a large mulberry garden near to the current palace. Buckingham Palace Garden is now home to **45 different types of mulberry trees**, and since 2000 it has held the National Collection of Mulberries. In the 1930s Lady Zoe Hart Dyke started a [Silk Farm in Lullingstone Castle](#), Kent. At its height the farm had a 20-acre plantation of white mulberries to feed thousands of silkworms, breeding in 30 rooms of the house. Silk from Lullingstone was used to make

the late Queen Mother's coronation robes in 1937, Queen's Elizabeth II's wedding dress in 1947 and her coronation robes in 1953.

An elegant, spreading, broad-crowned specimen tree, the long-lived **Black Mulberry** is a majestic addition and impressive focal point. *Morus nigra* has large, heart-shaped dark green leaves that turn shades of yellow in autumn, and deep purple-red edible fruits in August and September. Highly sought after, the deliciously sweet fruit are seldom available in the shops and can be eaten raw or used in recipes as a substitute for blackberries and raspberries. They take several years after planting to produce fruit.

Planting Companions for Black Mulberry

The spreading habit means it needs a substantial open, sunny space, although it will take several decades to reach its full height. Traditionally grown in short grass,. Ideal companion plants include spring bulbs and shade-tolerant, low-growing perennials like lungwort, primroses and winter aconites.

Silver Birch *Betula pendula*



The Silver Birch tree is a handsome, vigorous, slender, medium-sized British native. The pale, near-white bark of mature trees is a lovely feature throughout the year; it is relatively smooth and peels over time, which keeps it looking white and bright. Older trees develop dark ridges as they mature, especially at the base.

The light, feathery canopy of supple, leafy stems hanging from the main branches flutters and sways in the breeze, only casting gentle dappled shade, so many plants can be grown underneath it. Silver Birch catkins are yellow-green, appearing in early spring and are a valuable source of pollen for insects coming out of hibernation early.



Although not native, the **Himalayan Birch** *Betula utilis jacquemontii* is a little smaller and often set in a small group underplanted with spring bulbs such as snowdrops and bluebells. It has the most amazing white bark

Field Maple *Acer campestre*

The Common **Field Maple** is a round headed native tree. In spring, the bright green leaves appear at about the same time as the small, insignificant flowers, which are popular with bees. The mature leaves are deep green and then turn a glorious, mellow orange-yellow in autumn.



Trees for the Green- native trees for blossom.

Bird Cherry *Prunus padus*



Bird Cherry is fast-growing, native, deciduous tree growing to around 10m. In early summer, they have strands of small, almond scented, white flowers that ripen into dark fruit which are popular with birds. As with most cherries, the foliage colours beautifully in autumn. *Prunus padus* *watereri* has longer flowers. There is already a bird cherry by the rectory. They will grow on any reasonably well drained soil, including poor, compacted urban ones, and thrive

on chalk.

Pink Bird Cherry *Prunus padus Colorata*



The **Purple Leaf Bird Cherry** is a pink flowering variety of the native Bird Cherry tree. It is a striking specimen, with excellent contrasts and changes of colour across the year. The leaf buds and new stems begin as a deep purple, bronzing into a coppery tone as the leaves unfurl, becoming deep green in summer and then red in Autumn. The flowers appear in May, while the leaves are still fresh, on long flowering strands called racemes. Each delicate flower has pale pink petals around a rose-hip coloured centre. These face out in every direction from their central stalk, appearing all the more vivid because of the rich foliage. The small, bitter black fruit are

popular with birds. With its narrow, upright, canopy it reaches a height of about 10 metres. They both need sun to flower really well, but otherwise tolerate partial shade and are not fussy as to soil.

Wild cherry *Prunus avium*:

The **Wild Cherry tree, *Prunus avium***, is a vigorous native tree to 12m with scented white flowers. It will grow on any soil with decent drainage but may sucker to create a thicket.

Prunus avium plena RHS award of merit. A spreading medium tree with double flowers H8-12 m, W8m Full height 20-50 years.

