



Planting Trees for the Future British Native & Naturalised Trees

We're in a climate emergency and it's threatening our planet. Global warming is happening at a faster rate than ever. Polar ice caps are melting, forests and peatlands are burning and biodiversity is being lost.

There will be devastating global consequences as temperatures soar or winter rainfall increases. Changes will be irreversible as ecosystems collapse. Our planet will be unrecognisable.



In the UK, we're not yet truly experiencing major changes but they are coming. UK crop yields were down between 40-50% in 2020 due to the long, hot spring and summer. Flooding is occurring with greater frequency as our winters get milder and wetter and summer temperatures are now frequently well above average.

Two of our most powerful weapons to fight climate change are trees and hedgerows (or even plain hedges).

Trees are fantastic carbon capture and storage machines. Like great carbon sinks, woods and forests absorb atmospheric carbon through photosynthesis and lock it up for centuries. The entire woodland ecosystem plays a huge role in locking up carbon, including the living wood, roots, leaves, deadwood, surrounding soils and associated vegetation.

Planting a tree or establishing a hedge or hedgerow is truly a legacy action – something that future generations will benefit from. These trees don't have to be true natives but if they are, they'll thrive and our native wildlife will love what they have to offer be that as a food source, a breeding ground or simply a safe, protective place to shelter. So, get busy and plant some trees and if you have land, hedges and hedgerows are great too.

You'll find a list of native and naturalised trees at the end of this document and try the following websites to help you find a tree:

- General tree information; www.woodlandtrust.org
- Fruit tree advice (and a great day out); www.brogdalecollection.org
- General advice; www.rhs.org.uk
- Dorking Trees for Life: advice and free tree whips; no website but find them on Facebook or email us at re-betchworth@gmail.com and we'll put you in touch.

Re-Betchworth are working with Dorking Trees for Life who are able to supply small whips for free. So, if you choose a fairly standard, native or naturalised/common tree, contact us and we'll see if we can get you one for free, or get in touch direct.

Purchasing and planting your tree

One of the worst things that happens to commercially-grown trees is having their roots trimmed to ensure they fit into pots. Whenever possible, buy bare-root trees as their roots systems have been allowed to develop naturally, and the tree will grow faster and better as a result.



The best time to plant your tree is in deep winter when the tree is dormant; between December and end of February.

Dig a hole twice as wide as the root system (or pot) and scatter in some leaf mould (which will contain beneficial mycelium filaments – simply collect some from 3-5" below the leaf litter).

If planting a small whip, it's enough to create a slit in the soil with a spade, slot the root system in and then heel in the soil firmly.

Re-fill the hole with a mixture of soil and compost (not peat-based).

Water new trees regularly for the first couple of years of growth.

If you have rabbits or deer, protect your new tree with a cage of chicken wire or a (ideally bio-degradable) tree protector. If your tree is larger than a whip – say grown in a pot – please consider staking it for the first few years of growth as it will take more time for the root system to settle in, grow and support the tree.

True Native Trees

"True" native trees" are usually defined as trees that colonised Britain during the time between the end of the ice age (about 10,000 years ago) and the formation of the English Channel by the gradual expansion of ancient rivers, some thousands of years later. Trees that came after the formation of the English Channel had formed are generally called Naturalised – they've been around for a while, just not as long!

- Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*)
- Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*)
- Aspen (*Populus tremula*)
- Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*): not a strict, true native as it probably arrived in the Stone Age.
- Birch (Downy Birch, *Betula pubescens* & Silver Birch, *Betula pendula*)
- Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*)
- Box (*Buxus sempervirens*, South of England only)
- Buckthorn (Alder Buckthorn, *Rhamnus frangula* & Purgive Buckthorn, *Rhamnus cathartica*, Sea Buckthorn: *Hippophae rhamnoides*)
- Cherry (Bird Cherry, *Prunus padus* & Wild Cherry, *Prunus avium*)
- Crab Apple (*Malus sanguinea*)
- Elder (*Sambucus nigra*)
- (Wych) Elm (*Ulmus glabra*)
- Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*)
- Hazel (*Corylus avellana*)
- Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*)
- Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*, mainly South of England)
- Juniper (*Juniperus communis*)
- Lime (Large Leaved Lime, *Tilia platyphyllos* & Small Leaved Lime, *Tilia cordata*. Mainly South of England)
- Maple (*Acer campestre*, mainly South of England)
- Oak (Common Oak, *Quercus robur*: Sessile Oak & *Quercus petraea*)
- Poplar (Black Poplar, *Populus nigra* & Aspen poplar, *Populus tremula*)
- Rowan (aka Mountain Ash, *Sorbus aucuparia*)
- Scots Pine (*Pinus sylvestris*)
- Spindle (*Euonymus europaeus*)
- Strawberry Tree (*Arbutus unedo*, Ireland only)
- Whitebeam (*Sorbus torminalis*)
- Willow (Goat Willow, *Salix caprea*: White Willow, *Salix alba*: Crack Willow, *Salix fragilis*)
- Yew (*Taxus baccata*)

Naturalised (but not true natives)

The following trees are not native but have been grown in the UK for centuries and have become naturalised (i.e. introduced into gardens or in the wild where they now flourish). This isn't a complete list, for that visit www.woodlandtrust.org.uk

- Apples (*Malus x domestica*)
- Cedar (*Cedrus libani*)
- Chestnut, Horse (*Aesculus hippocastanum*)

- Chestnut, Sweet (*Castanea sativa*, introduced by the Romans)
- Cherry Plum (*Prunus cerasifera*)
- Dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*)
- Guelder Rose (*Viburnum opulus*)
- Hemlock (*Tsuga heterophylla*)
- Laburnum alpinum
- Laburnum anagyroides
- Larch, European (*Larix decidua*, introduced 400 years ago)
- Maple, Norway (*Acer platanoides*)
- Medlar (*Mespilus germanica*)
- Oak, Holm (*Quercus ilex*)
- Oak, Turkey (*Quercus cerris*). Introduced in the 1700's, the Turkey Oak isn't as valuable to wildlife as our native oak and is home to the knopper oak gall wasp.
- Pear (*Pyrrus communis*, introduced in AD 995)
- Plane (*Platanus x hispanica*, introduced in the 18thC)
- Plum (*Prunus domestica*)
- Rhododendron × superponticum (be careful rhododendrons can be very invasive)
- Snowy Mespilus (*Amelanchier lamarckii*)
- Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*)
- Walnut, Common (*Juglans regia*)