

Activity ideas for our younger tree trailers

Why not spot red kites soaring high in the sky and occasionally pausing in the beech trees **11**; look out for the white egret by the stream at **31** and **33**; count the rings in the stump of the felled tree at **6**; set up camp in the evergreen oak forest **18**; make a flour trail for friends, spot painted stones hidden around the park (and paint and hide your own!)... and have a picnic whilst you're here...

Make a 'journey stick': collect small bits and pieces (leaves, feathers, twigs, anything on the ground and no longer living – no need to pick things) along your walk and as you find them, tie them to a stick or stick them to a bookmark-size piece of card with double-sided sticky tape. Full instructions on the website.

Trees in books: trees pop up in lots of books, as well as making the paper on which they are printed. Can you think of a few? How about the Ents, talking tree-like creatures and guardians of the forest in JRR Tolkien's books? And the mischievous and mighty Whomping Willow at Hogwarts – not one to have a cuddle with! See if you can think of some others on your walk...

"I speak for the trees, as the trees have no tongues" – The Lorax, by Dr Seuss

When you have done the walk, don't forget to download your certificate from the website!

Florence Park past and present

History: The park and surrounding housing estate were created in the 1930s to house Cowley car factory workers and their families, and some still live on the estate today. Built on farmland, the park was designed around a line of elm trees which followed the small brook **F**. These elms succumbed to Dutch Elm Disease, but the poplars seen in early photos of the park still survive today **54**. The wonderful chestnut alley **3** was planted in 1953 to mark the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, and Coronation Avenue is still a much-loved feature. The 21 acres which host the park were donated by the builder of the estate, Mr F E Moss, in memory of his sister Florence. For early photos of the park, and history of the estate, see 'The Changing Faces of Florence Park', by local resident Sheila Tree.

Who's here today? Today, the park and surrounding estate is hugely popular and is also home to lots of great projects. Friends of Florence Park run one of the park's several annual festivals, 'Flo Fest'; Incredible Edible have planted a forest garden at the north west entrance **D** to inspire local people to nibble and grow food; Flo's The Place in the Park is in the former Children's Centre, and plays host to the Food Love Operation café, nature nursery, Isis midwives and a full programme of activities for all; Local Environmental Action Florence Park (LEAF) is a group of local residents working to support wildlife, reduce air pollution and tackle climate change in the area; and Naturehood is an Earthwatch project launching in the area in spring 2020, so get involved!

And not far away... Head out of **D** for Oxford City Farm and Boundary Brook Nature Park; take the north-east exit onto Rymers Lane to head to The Children's Allotment and Barrack's Lane Community Garden. And cross Rymers Lane between **A** and **G** to find Restore's Elder Stubbs allotment project.

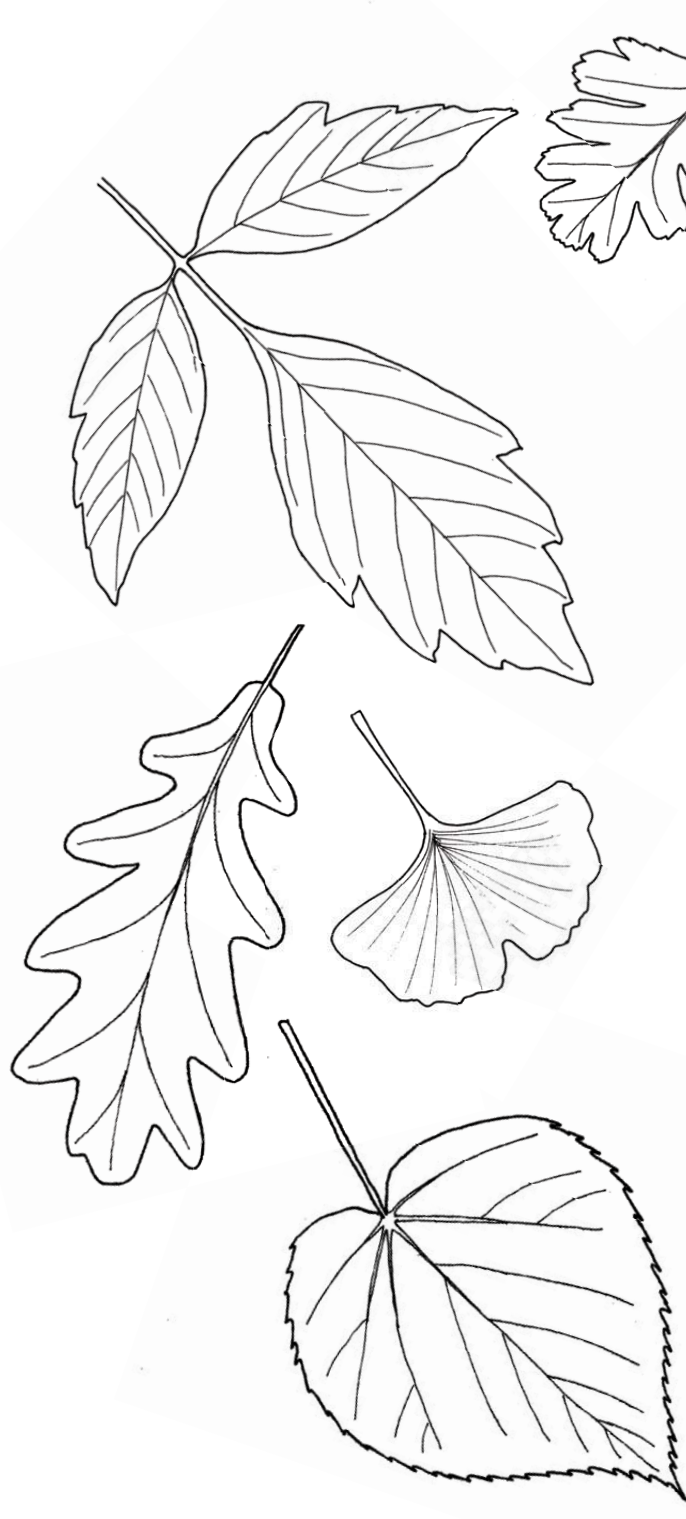
The creation of this map was inspired by the Hogacre Common Nature Trail and Low Carbon West Oxford Tree Trail, and exists thanks to funding from Oxford City Council through their Green Neighbourhoods grant scheme and to support from Low Carbon West Oxford (LCWO). Special thanks goes to a number of individuals who gave their time to help identify many of our wonderful trees: Nell Slocock, Andre Henriques, Gwyneth Hueter and Hugo Crombie. Thanks also to Friends of Florence Park, Flo's The Place in the Park and LEAF for enthusiasm!

The aim of Oxford Tree Trails is to support and develop appreciation and understanding of our local trees across the city. Through the website, we also hope to encourage people to explore green spaces further afield as well as on their doorsteps, and to enable others to create their very own tree trail in their local area – get in touch if you are interested!

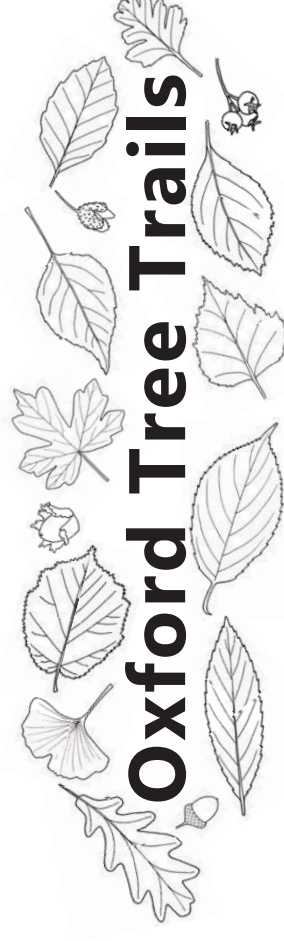
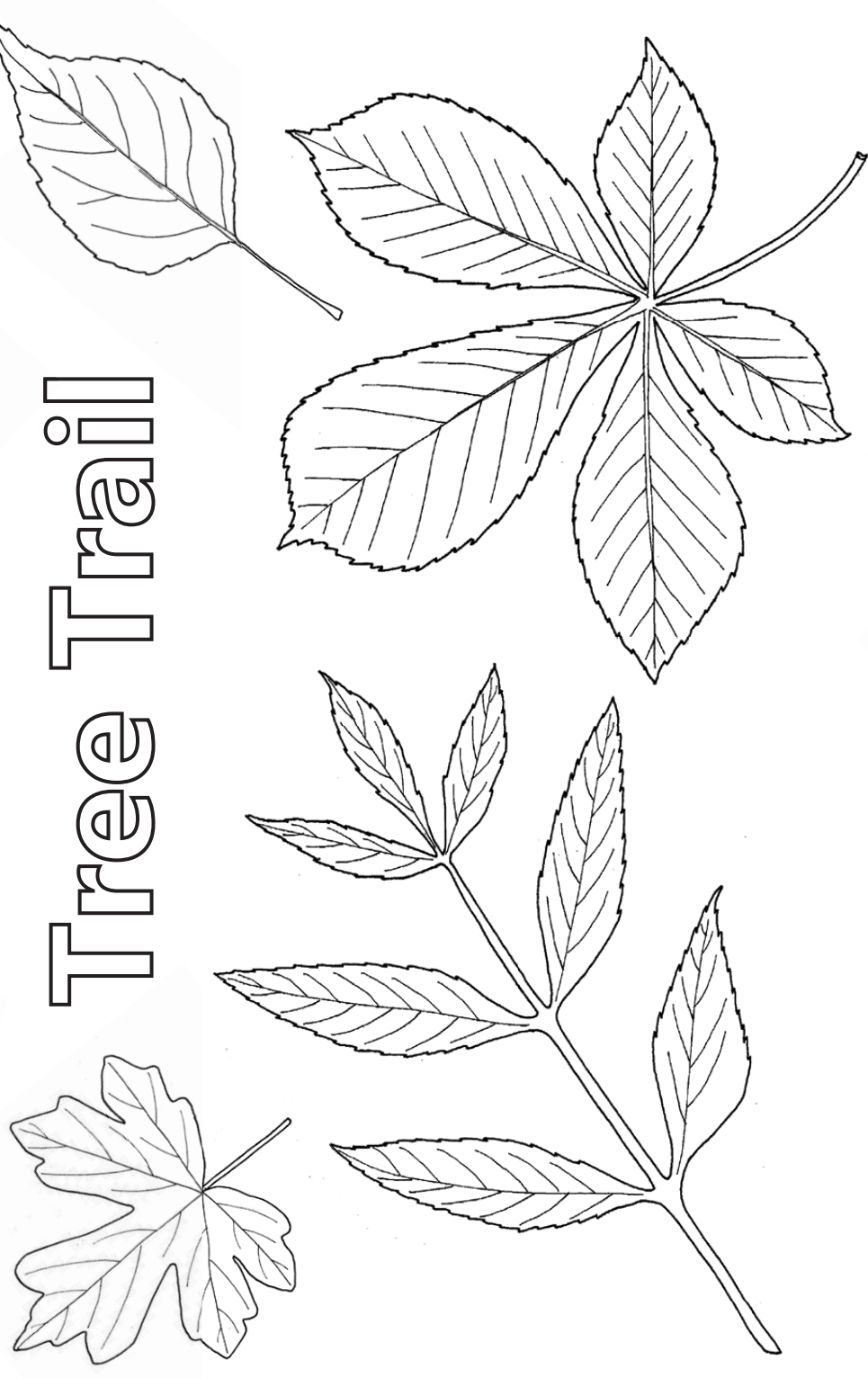
For more information, including maps of other trails, visit www.oxford-tree-trails.org www.facebook.com/OxfordTreeTrails

Please note: this map is produced and researched by local volunteers – any comments, corrections or help with future versions will be gratefully received.

This map is dedicated to Maya and Eva who I hope will remember the trees of their childhood park and our fun times in and around them for the rest of their lives. Mim Saxl, Spring 2019



Florence Park Tree Trail



Oxford Tree Trails

Ash Wednesday, if they forgot, other kids could stamp on their feet!

Uses: chariot axles due to strength and elasticity.

39 Weeping ash

Spot branches of non-weeping host tree sprouting out the top of this umbrella-shaped tree by sandpit.

40 Cherry

Sweet fruit in summer. If you want a good crop of cherries, ask a woman who has just had her first child to eat the first ripe cherry (Danish folklore).

Uses: furniture; fruit; soothing coughs.

41 Limes

From view point at E, this looks like one tree; it is in fact two which have grown together to form domed shape of one.

Wonderfully perfumed flowers in summer; edible leaves in early spring. Also called 'linden' (US). Sacred in many cultures.

Local Environmental Action Florence Park (LEAF) chose leaf as their logo as it provides both pollen and nectar for bees, and with many different types flowering at different times of year, this food is available for a long period.

Uses: leaves and flowers dried to make calming linden tea; popular in love spells; makes great honey when planted near hives!

42 Hawthorn

Young hawthorns in corner of Flo's garden. Home of faery trysts. Sprig in the hatband protects against lightning, but beware, sleeping in a room with May blossom attracts deep misfortune! In Ireland, a railway and road have been altered to avoid cutting one down.

Uses: culinary; medicine; tool handles.

43 Hazel

Nestled behind hawthorn. Look out for catkins and edible hazelnuts, also called cobnuts.

44 Field maple, like 14

Young version of 14 – look at corky ridges on its young twigs.

45 Tree of heaven

Planted for Anne Wain, much-loved social worker who worked with many local families. Read her story on the sheet on the wall nearby.

Species Chinese, arrived in the UK in 1740s. Invasive, nicknamed 'tree of hell' (!) but upside is thrives in neglected areas. 'Skunk tree' due to smell - one to enjoy with your eyes!

but cooked make syrup to combat colds and 'flu. Traditionally used to make wine.

"Your mother was a 'amster and your father smelt of elderberries!" – a rude French soldier to King Arthur's knights in film 'Monty Python and the Holy Grail'!

Uses: culinary; smell of the leaves used to keep flies away from cheese, but leave food out overnight under an elder and it is a gift to the faeries...

33 American sweetgum

Stunning autumn colour. Easy to recognise from five-pointed star-shaped leaves and hard spiked fruits.

Uses: veneer for plywood; interior décor; picture frames; chopsticks.

34 Black poplars

Early addition to park in 1930s, can be spotted in early photographs. Now a favourite with park's pigeons and woodpeckers – look up at the holes! Most endangered native timber tree.

Uses: pallets; plywood; carts as wood resistant to shock.

35 Lawson cypress

Native to Oregon and northwestern California.

Uses: popular in Japan for coffins, shrines and temples; guitar soundboards.

36 Purple-leaf cherry

Ornamental cherry with dark leaves and light pink flowers in early spring.

37 Norway maple

Fabulous mysterious tree! Several possible explanations for its two sections, which come into leaf at different times.

Option 1: 'reversion' - tree with variegated (multicoloured) leaves starts producing leaves like a parent tree, as their pure green leaves contain more chlorophyll, so are more vigorous.

Option 2: grafted and the more vigorous host tree has decided to grow too! Slow growing ornamental variety grafted onto strong fast-growing host tree and then host sent out shoot.

Whatever correct, the more vigorous limb is growing out towards play area and the scar around it is where someone has tried to cut it off!

38 Raywood ash

Beautiful autumn colour. Ash currently under serious threat from Ash Dieback. Traditionally associated with protection and healing. Yggdrasil, the 'World Tree' in Viking Mythology, under which gods met. Kids used to take twig to school on

In Celtic mythology the Holly King ruled half the year from summer to winter solstice, when the Oak King defeated him to rule to midsummer. Traditionally its protective properties meant it was considered bad luck to cut them down - they put witches off running along hedges, after all!

28 Black pine

Very tolerant tree - can survive drought, heat, snow. Fitting symbol of immortality and vitality, also due to needles staying green through the winter.

Uses: grown in timber plantations in the UK for paper and construction – favoured in the UK over Scots pine.

29 Silver birch

Uses: witches' broomsticks; maypoles; traditionally used for babies' cradles due to symbolic association with new beginnings; national tree of Finland, with twigs used for gently beating the body during a sauna; tapped for sap to make 'birch water', supposedly drunk by athletes in some parts of the world to improve stamina – health benefits debated.

30 Scots pine

One of only three conifers native to UK; national tree of Scotland by popular vote. Sit a while in this grove, imagine the wind in the Caledonian forest, a priority habitat in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan, for the range of rare species that call it home.

High resin content, so slow to decay and popular in ship building and construction. People believed sapflow (movement of resin) affected by the moon like tides, so best not cut during the waning of the moon for ship building, as wood less waterproof.

Uses: construction; boat building; telegraph poles; needles and resin for respiratory problems, antiseptic and disinfectant; historically planted in lines along boundaries to help travellers find way in mist.

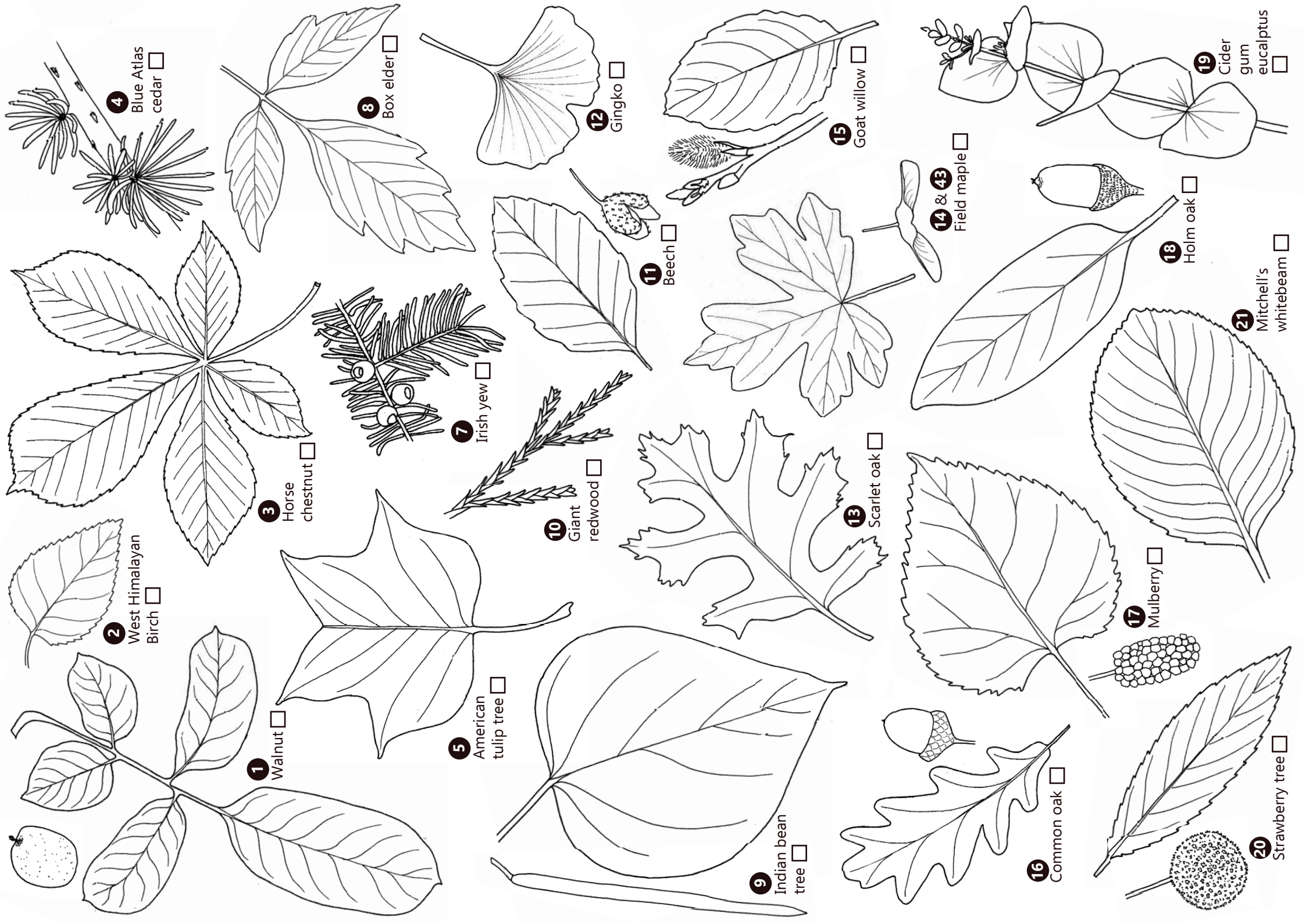
31 Broad-leaved Cockspur-thorn

Type of hawthorn, in rose family. White flowers in spring, green leaves in summer, orange leaves and red berries for birds in autumn.

32 Elder

Strong folklore association with faeries and protection. Look out for the Faery King and Queen here on Mindsummer's eve!

Sweet smelling white flowers make champagne, cordial and fritters in summer; raw crushed elderberries poisonous and have strong fetid smell,



1 Walnut

Walnuts are technically a seed, not a nut!
Uses: Brought to Britain by the Romans for their tasty 'nuts'; ink from husks apparently used by artist Leonardo Da Vinci and as hair dye in medieval Britain; beautiful wood; nutshell carvings popular in China.

2 West Himalayan Birch

Birches are one of the first trees to come into leaf, so are often associated with spring.

Uses: bark used as paper for Sanskrit scriptures, still today for sacred mantras, and as packaging.

3 Horse chestnut

This avenue was planted in 1953 for the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, hence its name. Conkers are not tasty like sweet chestnuts and 'horse' means 'not as good' - nothing to do with the animal. Smell the flowers if the 'candles' are blooming!

Uses: various medicines; playing conkers; very popular with the park's crows.

4 Blue Atlas cedar

Blue-tinged endangered cedar native to Morocco's Atlas mountains.

5 American tulip tree

aka 'canoe wood', as it was used by Native Americans to make boats. Awesome flowers in summer, leaves the shape of a cat's head.

6 Dead tree

Count the rings on the stump of this cedar to guess its age.

Trees are important even when they are dead - providing microhabitats for fungi, beetles, birds; slowly releasing nitrogen and storing carbon. 40% of woodland wildlife relies on dead wood. So this tree is precious too, not just for climbing on!

7 Irish yews

These dense ornamental trees provide great cover and food, in the form of red fruits, for the park's birds and squirrels. Traditionally a symbol of immortality as they can live a very long time (e.g. 2000-9000 years!); often found in graveyards. NB very poisonous berries.

8 Box elder

Also known as the ashleaf maple - check out its compound leaves.

Uses: pulp for fibreboard; ancient Anasazi flutes found in Arizona, which date back to 620-670 CE.

9 Indian bean tree

Not indian, no beans - though its fruit are bean-like in shape. Huge heart-shaped leaves, big trumpet flowers. Latin name *Catalpa bignonioides* - fun to say!

Funky fact: A 2003 study showed that when a hawkmoth caterpillar started eating the leaves, these leaves produced extra nectar. The nectar then attracted bodyguard ants to the damaged leaves, thus giving added protection to the whole plant!

10 Giant redwood

Did you know we have giant redwoods in the park?! This species of endangered trees can live for 1000s of years and includes the largest and tallest trees in the world. Native American names for the species include *wawona*, *toos-pung-ish* and *hea-mi-withic*. Many of the park's trees carry dedications, this one to Gladys Ayris.

11 Beech

The queen of British trees, to the oak king. Look up for red kites and look down for a carpet of flowers in spring.

Uses: traditionally used for divining.

12 Gingko

'Maidenhair tree'. Leaves found in fossils dating back 270 million years and are unique among seed plants, fan-shaped with veins radiating out into the leaf blade. Golden in autumn.

13 Scarlet oak

American species of oak. Leaves have bristle-tipped teeth on each lobe, unlike the common oak (16).

14 Field maple

Well-worn by years of being climbed on! Mini versions popular with bonsai enthusiasts.

15 Goat willow

One of the pussy willows, with beautiful soft catkins in spring.

Uses: flutes in Scandinavia.

16 Common oak

One of the best-known native trees. Many live to over 1000 years; symbol of strength and survival. Acorns not produced until tree is 40 years old. One of the hardest and most durable woods, but timber is not ready to be used in construction until tree is 150 years old.

Uses: Viking ships; whiskey barrels.

17 Mulberry

Deliciously tasty fruits - this tree's location is reluctantly shared! Spot others as you continue your walk...

18 Holm oak

A long-living evergreen oak. Very popular playing spot. Can get very wide at the bottom - one in Gloucestershire is 1.2m tall, but 8.3m in circumference.

Uses: hard tough wood used for wagons, ships, wine casks.

19 Cider gum eucalyptus

Produces a sweet sap which ferments to something like apple cider - hence its name. Very tolerant of cold.

20 Strawberry tree

Grows 'strawberries'... but not real ones. Second part of its latin name *Arbutus unedo*, means 'only one', as the fruit doesn't merit a second munch.

Uses: jam; Portuguese brandy called medronho.

21 Mitchell's Whitebeams

Large leaves with white undersides beautiful in wind. Leaning probably because seeking light.

22 Honey locust "Sunburst"

Non-thorny variety. Dainty yellow leaves go green in summer, golden in autumn; 'bipinnate', meaning they have feathery fern-like leaflets on either side of the leaf stem.

Uses: Sweet tasting pulp from fruit pods used for food and medicine by Native American people; also tea.

23 Japanese cedar 'Elegans'

Evergreen conifer with soft feathery foliage throughout its life; turns red-bronze in autumn.

24 Apple tree

Worcester Pearmain planted in memory of Sandy Kennedy, great lover and planter of trees. Part of Incredible Edible forest garden. Over 700 types of apple in the UK. Traditionally sung to in winter - 'wassail' - in exchange for bumper crop following year.

Uses: an apple a day...; pies, apple bobbing, cider.

25 Winter-flowering cherry

Japanese, with small pink flowers appearing intermittently autumn to spring.

26 Dawn redwood

Short deciduous redwood. Considered extinct until rediscovered in China in 1940s; now in lots of UK gardens.

27 Holly

'Golden King' variety, yellow-fringed leaves. The pre-Victorian 'Christmas Tree', still very much associated with yule.

23 Japanese cedar elegans



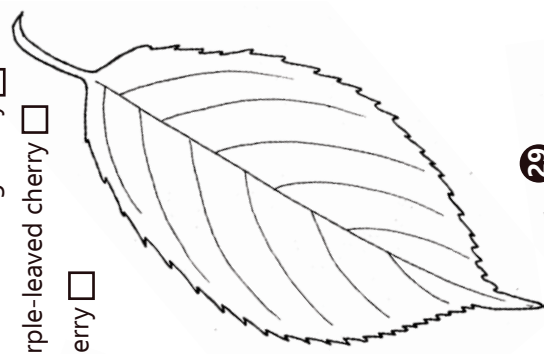
24 Sandy's apple



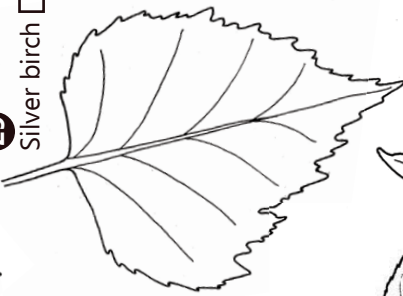
25 Winter-flowering cherry

36 Purple-leaved cherry

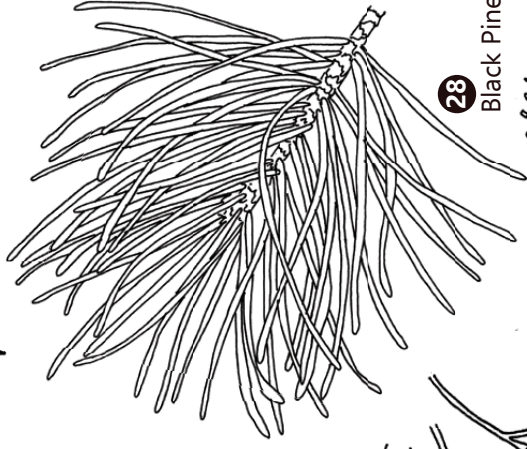
40 Cherry



29 Silver birch



28 Black Pine



33 American sweetgum



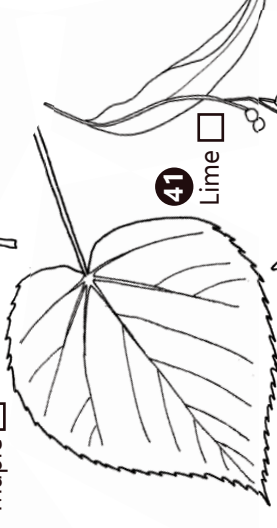
32 Elder



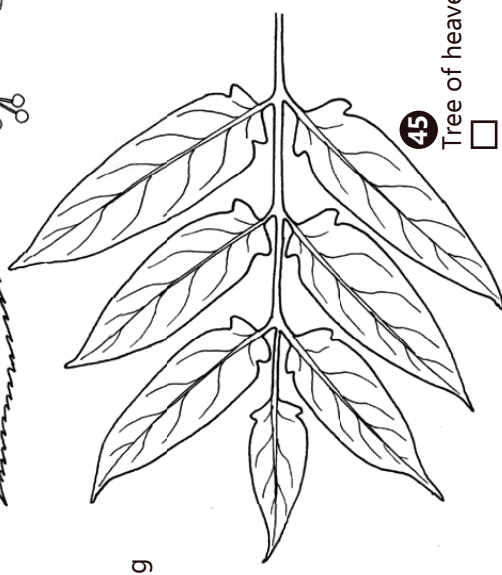
37 Norway Maple



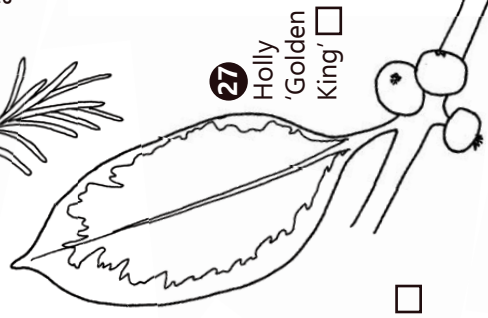
41 Lime



45 Tree of heaven



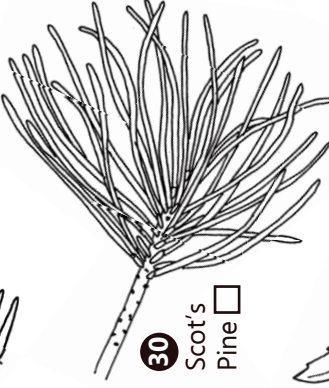
27 Holly 'Golden King'



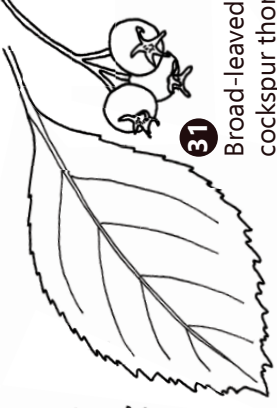
26 Dawn redwood



30 Scot's Pine



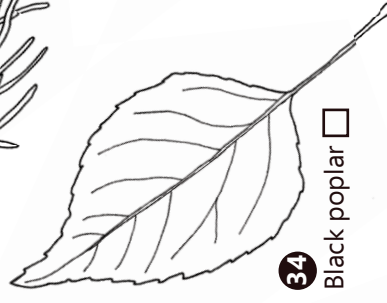
31 Broad-leaved cocksspur thorn



35 Lawson Cypress



34 Black poplar



38 Raywood ash



44 Hazel



42 Hawthorn



39 Weeping ash



Welcome to the Florence Park Tree Trail!

The trail can be done in one, with the opportunity for a celebratory tea and cake stop at Flo's, and takes about 40 minutes, walking at a reasonable pace. Alternatively, it can be done in shorter sections to suit, e.g. **Shorter eastern trail with plenty of opportunities for play stops:** starts at **A** and follows the route to **C**, where it then cuts straight to **28** to follow the rest of the trail back to Flo's. **Accessible wheelchair/buggy friendly route:** begin at **A** and follow route to **B**. Stick to the paved path and admire the many trees marked on the map which you can see from the path. Instead of cutting across the grass from **27** to **28**, follow path along the north of the park and then take a right turn to follow the hawthorns of **31**. Follow rest of the route to Flo's.

- A** Start here by tennis court kiosk.
- B** Pause here for a great view of the range of trees by the park's main entrance - cedars, holly, yews, eucalyptus, ginkgos... Sniff the fragrant daphne shrub *****, knee-height, with fragrant pink flowers in the winter.
- C** For shorter version of the walk, cross here to **28**
- D** Grand beeches at north western entrance; nearby Incredible Edible's forest garden hosts fruit trees and bushes for community to enjoy.
- E** Look east beyond play area to see huge domed lime **41**; spot young apples in the mini community orchard behind the poplars.
- F** Elms ran along this brook on farmland, park originally designed around them. Fell victim to Dutch Elm Disease, but can be spotted in old photographs.
- G** Exit to Rymers Lane
- H** Grab a cup of tea and some cake at Flo's The Place in the Park café at the end of your walk. Grab tea and cake at café. Check out numerous events and activities on offer in this community-owned space. And what's that tree in the logo... arbus lollipopus perhaps??

Start here

Red kite

Bug hotel

Egret

Crow

Some highlights:

Autumn colour: ginkgos **12** scarlet oak **13** honey locust **22** dawn redwood **26** American sweetgum **33** ash **38**
Fragrance: horse chestnut candles on Coronation Avenue **3** daphne ***** limes **41**
Environmental significance: endangered cedars and redwoods **4** & **10** Incredible Edible forest garden **24** absent elms **F** threatened ash **38** wonderful limes **41**
 And whatever you do, don't miss the fabulous rebellious double tree by the playground **37**!

