The trail starts to the right of the Memorial Arch and follows a clockwise direction looping around the perimeter and finishing back the start point.

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Victoria Embankment's Memorial Gardens are on the English Heritage register of Parks and Gardens and are Grade II listed. Officially opened in 1927, they play host to a multitude of fascinating trees, some still existing from original plantings, and some more recent in remembrance of loved ones passed away.



'But that which is more remarkable, is the virtue of the famous timber of this noble (Cedar) tree, being proof against all putrefaction of human and other bodies, above all other ingredients and compositions of embalmers; and that by a pretty contradiction giving life as it were to the dead, and destroying the worms which are living; and as it does where any goods are kept in chests and presses of the wood' – John Evelyn (1664).

For more information on this and other tree trails, please contact Nottingham City Council's Parks and Open Spaces Service on; 0115 915 2733 or email; parksandopenspaces@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

Tree Trail

Victoria Embankment Memorial Gardens



There are approximately 250 trees in Victoria Embankment's Memorial Gardens.

This trail introduces a selection of some fascinating specimens to discover and enjoy.

Nottingham City Council Park Rangers

Nottingham
A city we're all proud of

1. Common Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*)

A native species mainly seen as a hedgerow shrub, but it can grow as a tree to 15m. The deeply divided leaves, flowers with single styles and haws with only one seed distinguish it from our so-called Midland Thorn (*Crataegus laevigata*), of which several of the double-flowered red ('Paul's Scarlet') and one of the pink ('Rosea Flore Pleno') varieties can also be seen in the Memorial Gardens.

2. Silver Birch (*Betula pendula*)

Known as the 'Lady of the Woods' as it sways gracefully in the wind. This is one of the most recognisable native trees in Britain. It is fast growing but short-lived and the striking white bark peels readily and becomes corky at the base in older specimens.

3. Japanese Crab (*Malus floribunda*)

Introduced to America and Europe in 1862, from Japan, but not known in the wild there and probably of hybrid origin. After coming into leaf very early, it is exceptionally floriferous in spring, with masses of white flowers from red buds, and produces tiny, pea-sized fruits by autumn.

4. Box Elder (*Acer negundo*)

Also called the Ash-leaved Maple and widely distributed in North America, where it is sometimes tapped for maple syrup, it has been cultivated in Britain since 1688. The wood is white, like Box, and the leaves have 3 to 5 or more leaflets, like Elder or Ash. Male trees, such as this one, have distinctive tasselled flowers in spring.

5. Wild Cherry (*Prunus avium*)

One of our most attractive native trees when in flower and progenitor of many modern, cultivated cherry varieties. In the central area, on opposite sides of the fountain, are two good specimens of the Double White Cherry (*P. avium* 'Plena'), a centuries-old variety that flowers exuberantly but sets no fruit.

6. Swamp Cypress (*Taxodium distichum*)

From the southern USA, introduced to Britain around 1640, this tree thrives where wet but copes equally well with dry soils too. It is a deciduous conifer, with alternately arranged leaves, a feature which helps to distinguish it from the otherwise very similar Dawn Redwood (*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*).

7. Common Lime (*Tilia* x *europaea*)

The largest native broadleaved tree in the UK, reaching 46m. It is a hybrid between our Small-leaved Lime (*T. cordata*) and Large-leaved Lime (*T. platyphyllos*). To the Northwest of the Gardens is a Crimean Lime (*T.* x *euchlora*), a mid-19th century introduction with glossy, dark green leaves that have the advantage of being free from aphids.

8. Tree of Heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*)

One of the first trees introduced from China when it arrived at the Chelsea Physic Garden in 1751. It is easily recognised by the large, late-flushing, pinnate leaves, the lower leaflets bearing prominent oil glands. The flower plumes of female trees are less smelly than those of the male (an example of which is located at the north-east entrance to the Gardens), and produce attractive, winged fruits.

9. Turkish Hazel (*Corylus colurna*)

From south-eastern Europe and southern Asia, thought to have been first grown in this country in 1665. A shapely, tidy tree with unusual corky bark, it is becoming increasingly popular for street planting. In good years it develops impressive heads of hazelnuts in large, bristly cups.

10. Maidenhair Tree (*Ginkgo biloba*)

A living fossil dating back 200 million years, it was brought here from China in 1754. It once had a worldwide distribution but is now regarded as extinct in the wild. Growing to 28m with an upright habit, its leaves are fan-shaped and turn butter-yellow in autumn. Fruits are foul-smelling, originally to attract dinosaurs.

11. London Plane (*Platanus* x *hispanica*)

It is believed this hybrid originated in Spain or France around 1650 and stand-out specimens have been recorded at 44m and 320+ years old. A commonly planted street tree because it tolerates pollution, the variegated bark readily flakes thus removing deposits. London Plane is less well known for its quality timber, called lacewood.

12. Indian Horse Chestnut (*Aesculus indica*)

From the north-western Himalayas, introduced to England in 1851. This species is first noticed in spring for its red-bronze emerging foliage, developing into handsome leaves with stalked leaflets, followed by tall spikes of elegant, multicoloured flowers in mid-summer.

13. Bird Cherry (*Prunus padus* 'Watereri')

A species native to northern Britain, this variant was introduced in 1914 and grows to 25m. It has an untidy appearance with long white flower spikes that can measure up to 25cm appearing in late spring. Ripe black cherries are bitter to our taste but are especially liked by birds, so soon disappear.

14. Cappadocian Maple (*Acer cappadocicum*)

Also known as the Coliseum Maple, it was introduced here from Turkey in 1838. Yellow flowers appear late in spring and it is notable in its leaves which have a brown tinge along the edge and then finally turn a strong yellow colour in autumn. It produces frequent root suckers from which it can be easily propagated.

15. Hybrid Bean Tree (*Catalpa* x *erubescens*)

This cross of the North American Indian Bean Tree and the Chinese Yellow Catalpa was raised in America in 1874 and cuttings sent to England in 1891. It is more vigorous than its parents, with characteristic spikes of white flowers in late summer and long, bean-like pods. A Golden Bean Tree, which has yellow-green leaves, is a recent planting nearby.

16. Golden Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus* 'Worley')

First raised in Germany in the late 19th century, this variety of the well-known Sycamore tree has smaller leaves that unfold yellow, fading to green except at the edges. Nearby there is a Brilliant Sycamore (*A. pseudoplatanus* 'Brilliantissimum'), a striking cultivar first produced in Britain in 1905. New foliage gradually changes through spring from pink to red and orange to yellow, then white and finally dull green in summer.

Acknowledgements: Graham Pearce.

17. Common Whitebeam (*Sorbus aria*)

Native to central and southern Europe and so called due to the leaves being white on the underside when they first open. It can grow to a height of 25 metres and produces edible red fruit. It has historically been referred to as the weather tree, for when the white underside of the leaves became visible, rain was believed to be on the way.

18. Common Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*)

This was the last species of tree to colonise Britain after the last Ice Age. It is native to Southern England and can grow to a height of 40m with a typical maximum age of 250 years. Trees are shallow rooted though, and are susceptible to being blown over. Beech nuts are called mast and are contained within a 4-lobed prickly case.

19. Red Oak (*Quercus rubra*)

Introduced to Britain in 1724 from Eastern North America, it is a fast-growing species used as both a timber and an ornamental tree that is conspicuous for its very large leaves. The bark is smooth and grey, like that of the Common Beech. The autumn colour in our climate is often a disappointing coffee-brown rather than a true red.

20. Blue Colorado Spruce (*Picea pungens* Glauca Group)

The species that was first introduced here from southern USA around 1862 is nowadays largely replaced by a more colourful range of natural variants such as this young, formally conical example. It is aptly named for the hard and sharp (pungent) points to the needles.

21. Smooth Arizona Cypress (*Cupressus arizonica* var. *glabra*)

An interesting example of the true Cypress genus, which is uncommon in this part of the country. The flaking bark is most unusual and the large, globular cones that persist on the tree are also features of this variety from Central Arizona, which was introduced to Britain in 1907.

22. Japanese Larch (*Larix kaempferi*)

Mainly used as an ornamental since its introduction in 1861, this species is similar to the European Larch which has been grown as a plantation tree since around 1620. The two have repeatedly hybridised in Britain to give a series of intermediates. This specimen is characteristic of the Japanese tree, having almost spherical cones with recurved scales, and dark rather than pale shoots.

23. Blue Atlas Cedar (*Cedrus atlantica* Glauca Group)

From the Atlas Mountains of North Africa, the species was introduced around 1840. This bluish, more commonly grown natural variant was first found in a valley in Algeria and seeds brought back to England by Lord Somers in 1845. It is especially tolerant of poor conditions and can grow very tall and broad.

24. Manna Ash (*Fraxinus ornus*)

Also called the Flowering Ash because of the large, feathery masses of scented inflorescences that appear in spring, this tree is native to southern Europe and Asia Minor, and has been grown in Britain since the 17th century. The sap hardens on contact with air, to yield a yellowish-white sweetening agent used in some herbal medicines.