

The trail starts by the main entrance to Woodthorpe Grange and works around in an anti-clockwise direction culminating with a scenic view down the park.

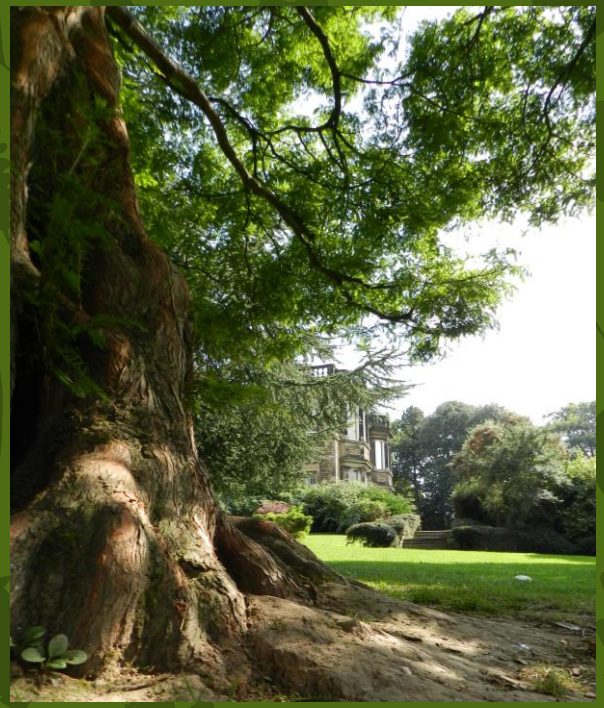
Woodthorpe Grange was built in 1874 after the land was bought by Henry Ashwell. Soon after, the new Nottingham Suburban Railway decided to run its line across and under Ashwell's estate. The designer of the railway, Edward Parry, subsequently bought the Grange. Ultimately, and following a generous donation from Jesse Boot, the house was sold to Nottingham City Council in 1921.

'Of all the foresters, the Horn-beam preserves it self best from the bruttings of deer, and therefore to be kindly entertain'd in parks'
~ 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

Woodthorpe Grange Park



There are approximately 1400 trees on Woodthorpe Grange Park.

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

Nottingham City Council Park Rangers

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1. Sessile Oak (*Quercus petraea*) *

Also known as the Durmast Oak, this lesser-known native species has stalked leaves and stalkless (sessile) acorns, whereas our so-called English or Common or Pedunculate Oak (*Q. robur*) has sessile leaves and stalked (pedunculate) acorns. Hybrids between the two also occur. This Oak is notable as it is at least 160 years old which pre-dates the building of Woodthorpe Grange.

2. Holm Oak *(Quercus ilex)*

Also known as the Mediterranean Oak, first introduced to Britain in the 16th century. This large evergreen oak was originally called the Ilex tree or Holly Oak, from which the Holly genus we know today takes its name.

3. 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.

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

This hybrid of south-eastern Europe's Oriental Plane and the American Buttonwood most likely originated in Spain around 1650. It is now a very familiar urban tree, because of its tolerance of harsh environments and it has become one of the tallest broadleaved trees in the British Isles, the record height being over 48m.

5. Red Oak (*Quercus rubra*)

From eastern North America, introduced in 1724. A fast-growing tree with large leaves and smooth, grey, bark. It is grown both for timber and as an amenity tree. The autumn colour in the British climate is usually a disappointing biscuit-brown, unlike the proper reds of the Scarlet Oak with which this Red Oak is often confused.

6. Hybrid Japanese Elm (*Ulmus* 'Sapporo Autumn Gold')

This cross between the Japanese and Siberian Elms was first grown in America from seed sent from Japan in 1958. It proved to have good resistance to Dutch Elm Disease and became available commercially in Britain by the early 1980s. It briefly lives up to its cultivar name with a week or so of golden leaf colour in late October.

7. Common Walnut (*Juglans regia*)

Also misleadingly called the English Walnut, this species was introduced from southern Europe by the Romans. It is renowned for its hard, heavy and durable timber, and for its edible nuts, but they require a long, hot summer to mature, so seldom do so fully in this country.

8. Fern-leaved Beech (*Fagus sylvatica* var. *heterophylla* 'Aspleniifolia') *

A fine specimen of a curious mutation that appeared in the early 19th century. It is a chimera, comprising an inner core of the normal tree with an outer layer of tissues producing deeply divided leaves. Any damage to the outer bark allows regrowth from the inside, so sprouting a normal, reverted branch, as visible here. It is notable as it is an uncommon planting to find on a public park.

9. Fastigiate Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus* 'Fastigiata')

Native to southern England, like Common Beech, the Common Hornbeam is distinguished by its rougher, serrated leaves and clusters of winged fruits. It is similarly used for hedging and this upright (fastigiate) cultivar with its characteristic candle-flame shape is popular for street planting. The name Hornbeam derives from the hardness of the timber.

10. Goat Willow (*Salix caprea)*

Also referred to as the Pussy Willow due to its fluffy catkins which show in spring. Native to Britain and Ireland, the leaves are oval in shape and grey in colour with a woolly felt beneath. Another *Salix* to note, also located in the formal gardens, is the Corkscrew Willow, whose characteristically twisting branches are often used in flower arrangements.

11. Weeping Holly *(Ilex aquifolium* 'Pendula') *

A rare tree that makes a dome of foliage in dense curtains from a high graft. This specimen is between two other hollies, to the left looking from the path is a Broad-leaved Silver Holly (*Ilex aquifolium* 'Argentea Marginata'), and to the right Hodgins' Holly (*Ilex* x *altaclerensis* 'Hodginsii'). It is notable as it is quite rare and has year-round interest.

12. Black Pine (*Pinus nigra*)

Several forms of this pine from various central and southern regions of Europe were introduced in the 18th and 19th centuries and are grown for both ornamental purposes (Austrian Pine) and for timber in forestry plantations (Corsican Pine). They have long, paired needles and produce abundant cones.

13. Sweet Gum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*)

Introduced to Europe from south-eastern USA in 1681. Easily mistaken for a maple but the leaves are alternately arranged rather than in opposite pairs. It has exceptionally varied and long-lasting autumn colours and the upright habit makes it a popular tree for street planting. In the furniture trade the timber, used as veneer, is known as Satinwood or Satin Walnut.

14. Tulip Tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*)

From eastern North America, around 1650. A primitive species, related to the magnolias, it has uniquely shaped leaves that colour deep yellow in autumn. The flowers are borne in mid-summer and resemble multi-coloured tulips.

15. Silver Lime (*Tilia tomentosa*)

One of five types of lime trees at Woodthorpe, this species is native to the Balkans region and has been grown in Britain since 1767. It is a particularly vigorous and shapely tree, capable of reaching a height of 32m. The leaves are coarsely serrated and silvery white below.

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

From the Atlas Mountains of North Africa, the species was introduced to Britain around 1840. This especially tough, more commonly grown natural variant with bluish colouration was discovered in a valley in Algeria and seeds were brought back to England in 1845.

* indicates particularly noteworthy specimens

Acknowledgements: Graham Piearce.

17. Common Yew (*Taxus baccata*)

A familiar native conifer species renowned for its longevity, possibly reaching 5,000 years old. Noted for being poisonous, though with some useful medicinal properties, and as a favourite wood for medieval longbows. Nearby is a specimen of the Irish Yew (*T. baccata* 'Fastigiata'), originating from County Fermanagh, N. Ireland, around 1770. This species is differs from the common variety by having a more columnar, upright form.

18. Giant Sequoia (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*)

Also known as the Wellingtonia, introduced as seed from California in 1853. This species boasts the world's largest living organism which has a diameter of over 9m and may be at least 2,000 years old. After a mere 160 years or so in Britain the oldest trees here are still growing strongly but they tend to lose their top when struck by lightning.

19. Sea Buckthorn (*Hippophae rhamnoides*)

This spiny plant is native to Britain, often becoming problematic on the east coast. Female plants produce plentiful clusters of spherical, bright orange, very acidic and highly nutritious berries, which last through much of the winter.

20. Dawn Redwood (*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*)

Known only as an extinct, fossil tree until its discovery in 1941, this species was introduced to Britain from south-eastern China in 1948. It is a deciduous conifer, turning golden before the leaves fall in autumn. In winter it is easily recognised by the straight single stem, which is weirdly fluted and has spongy, reddish bark.

21. Katsura (*Cercidiphyllum japonicum*)

From China and Japan, came to Britain as seed in 1881. A genus and species in its own botanical family and of obscure evolutionary origins. This male has rather inconspicuous flowers that are pretty close-up. Most striking to those who can detect it are the wafts of caramel scent emitted by the leaves as they yellow and brown in autumn.

22. Blue Pine (*Pinus wallichiana*)

Also known as the Western Himalayan Pine, introduced about 1823. The soft, drooping needles in groups of five and long, curved cones are distinctive. The earlier name Bhutan Pine is now reserved for another, closely related species, *P. bhutanica*.

23. Oleaster *(Elaeagnus umbellata)*

This spiky twiggy tree is also referred to as Russian Olive and bears a small fruit that ripens to red. It is native to the Himalayas, China and Japan and was introduced to Britain in 1830. It has silver scales on the shoots and leaves and features tiny, scented, yellow flowers in early summer.

24. Japanese Flowering Cherry (*Prunus* 'Kanzan')

Just one of very many popular spring-blossoming trees bred in China and Japan over several centuries. Here they are usually grafted onto our native Wild Cherry rootstock. 'Kanzan', with its masses of double, dusky pink flowers, was introduced around 1913. It is one of the commonest ornamental cherries planted in streets, parks and private gardens.