



Tree Information Sheets

About Ringwood Actions for Climate Emergency

To help combat climate change and increase the biodiversity of the area Ringwood Actions for Climate Emergency (RACE) are continuing to encourage the planting of a wider variety of UK Native Trees and wildflowers in the area.

Biodiversity is the infrastructure that supports all life on earth. Without these organisms, ecosystems and ecological processes, human societies could not exist. Ecosystems:

- supply us with oxygen and clean water;
- recycle carbon and balance nutrients;
- enable plants to grow and provide food;
- keep pest species and diseases in check;
- help protect against flooding and regulate the climate.

Our plantings are designed to protect and improve our surroundings at the same time as combatting climate change. The new trees and wildflowers will create new wildlife corridors and food sources for insects and birds and, of course, they capture carbon dioxide.

About these Information Sheets

These information sheets are designed to enable you to choose the right tree for the right place. They should be used together with your own observations and are not a replacement for expert advice. However, they are a useful starting point.

When choosing a tree

- look around to see what is thriving in the area already,
- look for overhead cables and potential underground services that might impact the choice of tree,
- prioritise native trees that will enhance the ecology and biodiversity of the area,
- don't underestimate the need to care for the tree to achieve long-term successful outcomes.



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Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*)

Beech is an enchanting species and known as the queen of British trees.

The bark is smooth, thin and grey, often with slight horizontal etchings. The edges of the leaves are untoothed and hairy. Triangular beech nuts form in prickly four-lobed seed cases. In winter the leaf buds are sharply pointed and not pressed against the twigs. They often hold on to their autumn leaves throughout winter, a trait known as marcescence.

Beech is monoecious, meaning both male and female flowers grow on the same tree. In April and May the tassel-like male catkins hang from long stalks at the end of twigs, while female flowers grow in pairs, surrounded by a cup.



Best locations

It requires a humid atmosphere and well-drained soil. It can be sensitive to winter frost. Beech woodland is shady and characterised by a dense carpet of fallen leaves and mast husks which prevent most woodland plants from growing. Only specialist shade-tolerant plants can survive beneath a beech canopy, however, single trees are suitable to provide shade in parks.



As beech is shallow rooted, mature trees are at risk of being uprooted in high winds. This may affect the siting of trees near houses. As a standard tree, Beech is only suitable for large gardens, however it is also used as a hedging plant due to the fact that it retains leaves in the winter providing year round habitat and cover.

Value to wildlife

Beech woodland provides an important habitat for many butterflies. Beech foliage is eaten by the caterpillars of moths, including the barred hook-tip, clay triple-lines and olive crescent. The seeds are eaten by mice, voles, squirrels and birds.

Native truffle fungi grow in beech woods. These fungi are ectomycorrhizal, which means they help the host tree to obtain nutrients in exchange for some of the sugar the tree produces through photosynthesis.

Because beech trees live for so long, they provide gnarled and knotted habitats for many deadwood specialists, such as hole-nesting birds and wood-boring insects. The bark is often home to a variety of fungi, mosses and lichens. Bearded tooth fungus (*Hericium erinaceus*) is a species of conservation concern that relies on beech woods in the south of England. It grows on the deadwood of fallen trees and on the trunks and large branches of standing trees, especially old, veteran or ancient individuals.

Soil: Well-drained **Age:** up to 200 years **Height:** 40m **Spread:** 8m



Bird Cherry (*Prunus padus*)

A stunning, scented show-stopper of a tree. In spring, nectar-loving animals flock to this beautiful tree for its almond-scented blossom.

The bark is smooth, peeling and greyish-brown and emits an unpleasant, acrid odour. Twigs are a dull, deep brown with pale markings. Shoots are hairy when young but become hairless with age. The leaf stems (petioles) have two red glands at the top. Leaves have hairs on the underside in the vein axils.

Cherry tree flowers are clustered along short stalks, botanically known as racemes. The flowers are hermaphrodite, meaning each flower has both male and female parts. Flowers appear in April. They are heavily scented, white with five petals, and measure 8-15mm across.



Best locations

The preferred habitat of bird cherry is damp, base-rich soils or wet flushed areas. Good for parks or areas where spring blossom would provide interest, however fruit litter may cause issues on paved surfaces. Root suckers can often be a problem. It is also toxic to livestock, particularly goats.

Value to wildlife

The spring flowers provide an early source of nectar and pollen for bees. The cherries are eaten by birds, including the blackbird and song thrush, as well as mammals such as badger, wood mouse, yellow-necked mouse and dormouse.

The foliage is eaten by caterpillars of many moth species, including the orchard ermine, brimstone and short-cloaked moth.

Soil: Prefers damp **Age:** up to 100 years **Height:** 15m **Spread:** 4-8m



Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*)

Blackthorn produces small clusters of white flowers before its leaves in early spring. The contrast of black branches against white flowers gave it its name – Blackthorn).

The twigs are smooth and dark, with side shoots ending in long spines. In autumn, black-purple fruit (sloes) appear. These are sour and can be used to make sloe gin.



Best locations

Blackthorn is suited to heavier soils and scrub areas. It is a quintessential English hedgerow tree.



Value to wildlife

Early flowering Blackthorn provides a valuable source of nectar and pollen for bees in spring.

Its foliage is a food plant for the caterpillars of many moths, including the lackey, magpie, swallow-tailed and yellow-tailed. It is also used by the black and brown hairstreak butterflies.

Birds nest among the dense, thorny thickets, eat caterpillars and other insects from the leaves, and feast on the sloes in autumn.

Soil: Most **Age:** up to 100 years **Height:** 7m **Spread:** 4-7m



Crab Apple (*Malus sylvestris*)

Crab Apple trees have an irregular, rounded shape and a wide, spreading canopy with greyish brown, flecked bark. They can become quite gnarled and twisted, especially when exposed, and the twigs often develop spines. This “crabbed” appearance may have influenced its name. It is one of the few host trees to the parasitic mistletoe, *Viscum album*, and trees are often covered in lichens.

In spring, the sweetly scented blossom is pollinated by bees and other insects. The blossom develops into small, yellow-green apple-like fruits around 2-3cm across

A forager’s delight, Crab Apple’s small, hard fruits make an exquisite, jewel-coloured jelly.



Best locations

Adaptable to a wide range of soils providing that they are not too dry or become waterlogged. Fruit litter may cause an issue on some sites.

Value to wildlife

The leaves are food for the caterpillars of many moths, including the eyed hawk-moth, green pug, Chinese character and pale tussock. The flowers provide an important source of early pollen and nectar for insects, particularly bees, and the fruit is eaten by birds, including blackbirds, thrushes and crows. Mammals, such as mice, voles, foxes and badgers also eat crab apple fruit.

Soil: Most **Age:** up to 100 years **Height:** 10m **Spread:** 4.5m



Dog Rose (*Rosa canina*)

The county flower of Hampshire, this familiar, scrambling beauty adorns hedgerows with its pale pink flowers.

Dog rose has strongly hooked, or curved prickles, and uses other shrubs and trees as support.

Leaves are divided into 2-3 pairs of smaller, toothed leaflets. The flowers are pink or white with five petals and many stamens. They have a faint sweet smell.

They produce red, oval, berry-like hips (15-20mm) in small clusters. Each hip contains many hairy seeds.

Rose hips are high in vitamin C and were traditionally used to make syrups taken to boost levels. Rose-hip oil is also a popular skincare product. The hairs inside the hips are an irritant and are extracted to make an itching powder.



Best locations

Likes full sun with moderately fertile, humus-rich, moist but well-drained soil but is tolerant of poor soil. Great for hedgerows and wildlife gardens.

Value to wildlife

Dog rose flowers are an important nectar source for insects.

Its fruits are a food source for birds such as blackbirds, redwings and waxwings.

Soil: well-drained **Age:** many years **Height:** 3m **Spread:** climbs



Dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*)

Dogwood is a small broadleaf shrub, typically found growing along woodland edges and in hedgerows. The bark is grey and smooth with shallow ridges, and its twigs are smooth, straight and slim.

The leaves are oval and about 6cm long, have smooth sides and curving veins. They fade to a rich crimson colour before falling in autumn. Dogwood bursts can be identified in the winter by the red of the newer twigs.

It is a hermaphrodite, meaning the male and female reproductive parts are contained within the same flower. The flowers are small with four creamy white petals, and are produced in clusters.

After pollination by insects, the flowers develop into small black berries – sometimes called “dogberries”.

Best locations

Dogwood thrives in damp woodland edges and in drier areas.

Value to wildlife

The leaves are eaten by the caterpillars of some moths, including the case-bearer moth, while the flowers are visited by insects and the berries are eaten by many mammals and birds.



Soil: Damp and on chalk **Age:** up to 100 years **Height:** 8-15m **Spread:** 5m



Field Maple (*Acer campestre*)

An inconspicuous tree for much of the year, the Field Maple comes to life in autumn when its leaves turn golden-yellow.

Field Maple has dark green, five-lobed leaves, which are smaller and have more rounded lobes than those of Sycamore. It has small, yellow to green, cupped flowers that appear in May which turn into large, winged fruits when pollinated.

The bark is light brown and flaky, and twigs are slender and brown and develop a corky bark with age. Small, grey leaf buds grow on long stems.

Best locations

Usually found in hedges and woods. Field Maple is a resilient, tough plant doing well on most sites, except waterlogged soils. Especially good on chalky soils. Tolerant of shade and frost.

Value to wildlife

Field Maple is attractive to aphids and their predators, including many species of ladybird, hoverfly and bird. Lots of species of moth, such as the mocha, feed on its leaves. The flowers provide nectar and pollen sources for bees and birds, and small mammals eat the fruits.



Soil: Most prefers chalk **Age:** up to 350 years **Height:** 20m **Spread:** 6-8m



Guelder Rose (*Viburnum opulus*)

Guelder Rose is a spreading, deciduous, upright shrub. It has greyish, hairless stems.

The leaves have three lobes with serrated edges a bit like a Maple, a channel running down the centre and fine hairs on the underside. They are 5-10cm long. In spring, the leaves are green, and they change to orange-yellow or red in autumn.

Flowers are flat lace-caps about 3cm across and are creamy-white, or sometimes pink, appearing in May to July. Each cluster of flowers is encircled by a ring of larger, sterile, flowers. The flowers are followed by round, translucent, bright red berries.

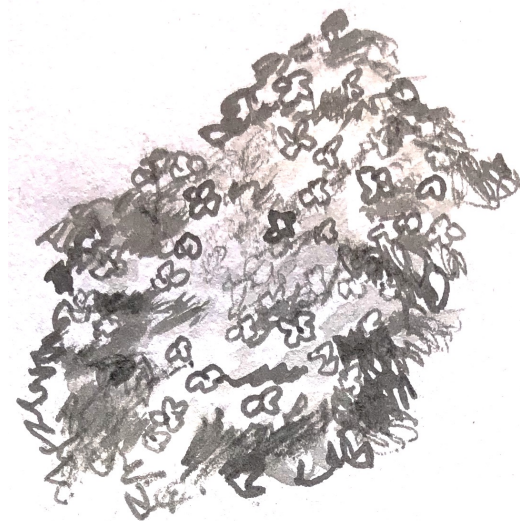
It is identified in winter by green, hairless buds close to the stems.

Best locations

Guelder Rose grows in damp, neutral or chalky soils at low altitudes. It is planted in parks and gardens and sometimes spreads from these sites to the wild to include yellow-fruited varieties. It does well in most soils and is good in coastal areas and exposed situations.

Value to wildlife

The red berries are an important food source for birds, including bullfinch and mistle thrush. The shrub canopy provides shelter for other wildlife. The flowers are especially attractive to hoverflies.



Soil: Damp neutral or chalky **Age:** many years **Height:** 4m **Spread:** 2-5m



Hawthorn (*Crataegus onogyna*)

The Hawthorn is also called the May tree after the month in which it blooms. They are characterised by being dense and thorny. The bark is brown-grey, knotted and fissured, and twigs are slender and brown and covered in thorns.

The leaves are around 6cm in length and comprised of toothed lobes. They turn yellow before falling in autumn.

Hawthorns are hermaphrodite, meaning both male and female reproductive parts are contained within each flower. The five-petalled creamy white flowers are borne in flat clusters and are strongly scented. These are followed by greenish berries, or haws, which ripen to red by September and are held on the tree well into winter to provide a good food source for birds. Each haw contains a single seed.

Identified in winter by the spines which emerge from the same point as the buds; distinguishing them from blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) which has buds on the spines in winter.

Another common name is Quickthorn because it quickly makes a very effective, dense and thorny stock-proof hedge, and has been grown for hundreds of years for this purpose.

Best locations

This species is commonly found growing in hedgerows, woodland and scrub. It will grow in most soils, but flowers and fruits best in full sun. Although best known as a country hedge, it also makes an excellent small garden tree with good wildlife value.

Value to wildlife

Hawthorn can support more than 300 insects. It is the foodplant for caterpillars of moths, including the orchard ermine, pear leaf blister, rhomboid tortrix, light emerald, lackey, vapourer, fruitlet-mining tortrix, small eggar and lappet moths. Its flowers are eaten by dormice and provide nectar and pollen for bees and other pollinating insects. The haws are rich in antioxidants and are eaten by migrating birds, such as redwings, fieldfares and thrushes, as well as small mammals.

The dense, thorny foliage makes fantastic nesting shelter for many species of bird.



Soil: Most **Age:** up to 150 years **Height:** 15m **Spread:** 6m



Hazel (*Corylus avellana*)

Hazel is often coppiced and can then live for several hundred years. It has a smooth, grey-brown, bark, which peels with age, and bendy, hairy stems. Leaf buds are green oval, blunt and hairy.

Hazel is monoecious, meaning that both male and female flowers are found on the same tree, although hazel flowers must be pollinated by pollen from other hazel trees. The yellow male catkins appear before the leaves and hang in clusters from mid-February. Female flowers are tiny and bud-like with red styles.

Identified in winter by its nuts, which are each held in a short, leafy husk which encloses about three quarters of the nut. Small, green catkins can be present in autumn and through the winter.

Best locations

In the UK it's often found in the understorey of lowland oak, ash or birch woodland, and in scrub and hedgerows. Hazel will do well in most soils. Will cope well on coastal sites.

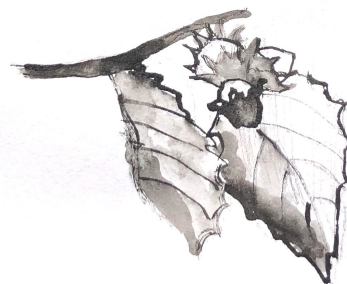
Value to wildlife

Hazel leaves provide food for the caterpillars of moths, including the large emerald, small white wave, barred umber and nut-tree tussock. Coppiced hazel also provides shelter for ground-nesting birds, such as the nightingale, nightjar, yellowhammer and willow warbler.

Hazel has long been associated with the dormouse (also known as the hazel dormouse). Not only are hazelnuts eaten by dormice to fatten up for hibernation, but in spring the leaves are a good source of caterpillars, which dormice also eat.

Hazelnuts are also eaten by woodpeckers, nuthatches, tits, wood pigeons, jays and small mammals. Hazel flowers provide early pollen as a food for bees.

The trunks are often covered in mosses, liverworts and lichens, and the fiery milkcap fungus grows in the soil beneath.



Soil: Most **Age:** uncoppiced up to 80 years **Height:** 12m **Spread:** 8-10m



Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*)

Common Hornbeam is a deciduous, broadleaf tree which has pale grey bark with vertical markings, and sometimes a short, twisted trunk which develops ridges with age. The twigs are brown-grey and slightly hairy and the leaf buds are similar to Beech, only shorter and slightly curved at the tips.

Similar shape to Beech leaves – oval with pointed tips. Hornbeam leaves, however, are smaller and more deeply furrowed than Beech leaves and have finely toothed edges. They are between 7-12 cm long, mid green, turning yellow and orange before leaf fall in autumn. The leaves are retained over winter on hedging.

The yellowish female catkins open in clusters in March and are followed by green winged fruits, which ripen to brown. Hornbeam is monoecious, meaning male and female catkins are found on the same tree.

Identified in winter by distinctive, papery seeds.



Best locations

Often confused with Beech at first sight, Hornbeam is a good substitute on wet or shady sites where Beech will not do well. It makes a medium-sized specimen tree on heavy clay soil in parklands and gardens where other trees will not thrive. It is an excellent hedge, retaining its leaves over winter in the same way as Beech. Shallow rooting may cause problems with hard surfaces, particularly when combined with small or poorly aerated soil volumes.

Value to wildlife

Like Beech, a Hornbeam hedge will keep its leaves all year round, providing shelter, roosting, nesting and foraging opportunities for birds and small mammals. Hornbeam is the food plant for caterpillars of a number of moth species, including the nut tree tussock. Finches and tits and small mammals eat the seeds in autumn.

Soil: Most **Age:** up to 300 years **Height:** 30m **Spread:** 8m



English Oak (*Quercus robur*)

Probably the best-loved British native tree, the English Oak is a familiar sight in parkland and the countryside. Its spreading, rugged shape, massive trunk and distinctive lobed leaves have all become a symbol for the British nation, and its seed, the acorn, is a logo for the National Trust. Long-lived, and with the highest conservation value of any of our native trees (it supports over 400 different species of insect) the English Oak is an essential part of our natural heritage.

The almost stalkless leaves have 4-5 lobes and reach about 12cm in length. They turn brown before leaf fall in late autumn. The bark is grey and deeply fissured.

The yellowish-green flowers are borne on the end of new growth in May; the male flowers are long catkins, the females small and inconspicuous. The fruit, the acorn, develops on the end of long stalks, the smooth oval green seed being held in a rough-textured cup. It ripens in autumn.

Best locations

Prefers heavy clay soils, but will do well on lighter soils which do not dry out. Good on exposed windy sites. Woodland, parkland, specimen tree and commemorative tree. Capable of becoming a very large tree on sites that are not too exposed and open, therefore, requires lots of space.

Value to wildlife

Over 400 species of insect depend upon the Oak – more than any other native tree. They are host to hundreds of insect species, supplying many birds with an important food source. In autumn, mammals such as squirrels, badgers and deer feed on acorns.

Flower and leaf buds of English Oak are the food plants of the caterpillars of purple hairstreak butterflies.

The soft leaves of English Oaks break down with ease in autumn and form a rich leaf mould beneath the tree, supporting invertebrates such as the stag beetle, and fungi, like the oakbug milkcap. Holes and crevices in the tree bark are perfect nesting spots for the pied flycatcher, redstart or marsh tit.

Bats also roost in old woodpecker holes or under loose bark, as well as feeding on the rich supply of insects in the tree canopy.



Soil: Prefers heavy soils **Age:** over 300 years **Height:** 40m **Spread:** 40-45m



Rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*)

The Rowan, or Mountain Ash, is perhaps the prettiest of our native trees. With delicate leaves, which create a light canopy, clusters of creamy flowers, scarlet-orange berries and good autumn leaf colour, it looks good through much of the year. Thoroughly hardy and trouble-free to grow, it has excellent wildlife value and is equally attractive in urban gardens as it is in woodland.

It is known as the Mountain Ash due to the fact that it grows well at high altitudes and its leaves are similar to those of Ash, however, the two species are not related.

Look out for its 5-8 pairs of serrated leaflets which are pinnate (like a feather). Each leaflet is long, oval and toothed.

Rowan is hermaphrodite, meaning each flower contains both male and female reproductive parts.

Best locations

Able to grow well in most soils, although it does best on lighter soils and tolerates very acidic soils. Good at high altitudes and in exposed conditions. Suitable for gardens and parks. Fruit litter may be a nuisance in some scenarios but the berries usually get eaten before they become problematic.

Value to wildlife

The leaves are eaten by the caterpillars of a number of moths, including the Welsh wave and autumn green carpet. Caterpillars of the apple fruit moth feed on the berries.

Flowers provide pollen and nectar for bees and other pollinating insects, while the berries are a rich source of autumn food for birds, especially the blackbird, mistle thrush, redwing, song thrush, fieldfare and waxwing.



Soil: Most **Age:** up to 200 years **Height:** 15m **Spread:** 4-8m



Silver Birch (*Betula pendula*)

Birch trees are lovely, graceful trees with pale bark and bright, heart-shaped leaves. They are in the genera *Betula*, which is the Latin word for “to shine,” and if you have a birch tree in your garden, you may agree that the tree seems to have a glow.

The Silver Birch is known as a pioneer species as it's often the first tree to grow in cleared areas or when an old tree falls.

It is Britain's oldest species. It is pretty and pale. Twigs are purple-brown with rough white spots on the shoots. Buds are long and sharp and, with age, the bark becomes papery- white with black fissures. The leaves are a distinctive triangular shape with drooping brown catkins in autumn.



Best locations

It grows on a wide range of soil types, although it favours sandy or acidic soils. However, it requires a high light environment and is sensitive to both drought and waterlogging. Great for planting in parks and next to transport corridors. Shallow rooting can cause problems with hard surfaces so the Silver Birch is not ideal for town centres or paved settings.

Value to wildlife

Birch woods have a light, open canopy, providing the perfect conditions for grasses, mosses, wood anemones, bluebells, wood sorrel and violets to grow.

Silver birch leaves attract aphids which provide food for ladybirds and other species further up the food chain. They are also a food plant for the caterpillars of many moths, including the angle-shades, buff tip, pebble hook-tip, and Kentish glory. Birch trees are particularly associated with specific fungi, including fly agaric, woolly milk cap, birch milk cap, birch brittlegill, birch knight, chanterelle and the birch polypore (razor strop).

Woodpeckers and other hole-nesting birds often nest in the trunk. The seeds are eaten by siskins, greenfinches and redpolls.

Soil: Most **Age:** 80-140 years old **Height:** 25m **Spread:** 4m



Spindle (*Euonymus europaeus*)

Spindle is a deciduous native tree, the bark and twigs are deep green, becoming darker with age, and have light brown, corky markings. Twigs are thin and straight.

The leaves are shiny and slightly waxy, and have tiny sharp teeth along the edges. They turn a rich orange-red before falling in autumn. Spindle is hermaphrodite, meaning each flower contains both male and female reproductive parts.

Flowers have four petals and grow in clusters in May and June, and are pollinated by insects.

Identified in winter by the vivid pink fruits which have bright orange seeds. Buds and twigs are angular and green.



Best locations

Spindle can be found most commonly on the edges of forests and in hedges, scrub and hedgerows. It thrives in chalky soils. Suitable for parks and small gardens, but note that the fruit is poisonous.

Value to wildlife

The leaves are eaten by caterpillars of moths, including the magpie, spindle ermine and scorched carpet, as well as the holly blue butterfly. The leaves also attract aphids and their predators, including hoverflies, ladybirds and lacewings, as well as the house sparrow and other species of bird.

The flowers are a rich source of nectar and pollen for insects such as the St Mark's fly.

Soil: Most but prefers chalk **Age:** up to 100 years **Height:** 9m **Spread:** 3m



Sweet Chestnut (*Castanea sativa*)

These long-lived giants, with their prickly-husks and deeply grooved bark, give us our classic Christmas nut.

Sweet chestnut is a deciduous tree that was introduced to the UK by the Romans.

The bark is grey-purple and smooth, and develops vertical fissures with age. The twigs are purple-brown and buds are plum, red-brown and oval in shape. They can develop vast girths which can reach up to 2m in diameter.

The large toothed glossy leaves are very striking, being about 16-28 cm long, 5-9 cm wide and oblong with a pointed tip and a serrated or toothed edge.

Long, yellow catkins of mostly male flowers, with female flowers at the base. After pollination by insects, female flowers develop into shiny, red-brown fruits wrapped in a green, spiky case. The trees begin to bear fruit when they are around 25 years old.



Best locations

The Sweet Chestnut will thrive on any well-drained soil. Late spring and early autumn frosts can affect fruiting. A handsome, fast-growing large tree, it is most often seen as an ornamental in parks and large gardens. Prickly fruit husks may become problematic in some situations

Value to wildlife

The flowers provide an important source of nectar and pollen for bees, micro moths and other insects, while red squirrels eat the nuts.

Soil: Well-drained **Age:** up to 700 years **Height:** 35m **Spread:** 5-9m



Wild Cherry (*Prunus avium*)

The Wild Cherry is one of the great glories of the woodland in spring, and makes an excellent specimen tree. Its distinctive spreading branches are laden with masses of bowl-shaped white flowers in April and May, and its autumn performance is no less spectacular when the leaves turn fiery red and orange. With shining reddish-brown bark and a broadly conical shape, this tree has a lot to offer in winter too.



The leaves are oval, green and toothed with pointed tips, measuring 6-15cm with two red glands on the stalk at the leaf base. They fade to orange and deep crimson in autumn.



Best locations

Wild Cherry enjoys deep, light, silty, nutrient-rich, mildly acidic soils but can adapt to chalky soils. Fruit litter may cause issues on paved surfaces – sterile cultivars mitigate this. It can cause thickets via root suckers.

Value to wildlife

The spring flowers provide an early source of nectar and pollen for bees; while the cherries are eaten by birds, including the blackbird and song thrush; as well as mammals, such as the badger, wood mouse, yellow-necked mouse and dormouse.

The foliage is the main food plant for caterpillars of several species of moth, including the cherry fruit and cherry bark moths, the orchard ermine, brimstone and short-cloaked moth.

Soil: Most **Age:** up to 100 years **Height:** 25m **Spread:** 8m