

Ford Park Tree Trail



1 – Beech. The best in the park. Note the smooth bark and straight trunk. In autumn it drops spiky cases of nuts.

2 – Apple. Most of the little apple trees grow against the orchard wall, facing the sun, but a few of them stand on their own.

3 – Greengage. These trees produce green plum-like fruit. Originally from France, they were first brought across to England by Sir William Gage in 1724.

4 – Yew. Always covered in dense, dark-green needles, and bearing red berries in autumn. English archers made bows from its branches because they were strong and flexible.

5 – Irish Yew. All Irish yews in the world are descended from one specimen discovered in Northern Ireland in 1780. Branches don't spread like other yews but grow upright and stay tightly together.

6 – Laurel. Most of the laurels in the park are ornamental and trimmed, lying to the left of the path, but the one to the right of the path is tall and twisted.

7 – Holly. There are tall holly trees on either side of the path. Look out for many more around Ford Park. Some are tall, but most are small and bushy. Small hollies often have spikier leaves than tall hollies. Female hollies bear red berries in autumn.

8 – Deadwood Logs. Dead and decaying trees are important. They provide a home and food for a variety of insects and fungi, and slowly release nutrients into the ground.

9 – Tree Information Board. Look ahead and just right of the wooden path. Spot one big Oak tree, with rough bark. The two big trees beyond with smooth bark are Beech. The big trees close to the wall also have smooth bark and are Sycamore. Check the leaf shapes to identify them.

10 – Black Pine. This is a common European pine, widespread around Britain, but not native. Look all the way around the park and you will be able to see one other tall pine. The branches sprout very long pine needles, which grow in bunches. Large pine cones are produced, which contain tiny nuts.

11 – Young Oaks. Planting for the future is important. Dozens of young oak trees have been planted around Ford Park. Imagine them being as tall as the other big trees around the park! Mature oak trees provide food and living space for more insects, birds, fungi and other forms of life than any other native British tree.

12 – Cypress. One stood just outside Ford Park's boundary wall when this tree trail was made, but it was toppled during a gale in January 2014. Trees are strong, but they have to fall some time. Another cypress can be seen in a garden across the road.

13 – Birch. The slender trees in this grove have trunks covered in light-coloured bark that peels away in paper-thin layers. Sometimes, a 'fairy ring' of fungi can be seen growing from the ground, forming a complete circle around one of the trees closer to the road.

14 – Sycamore. Notice how well this tree has spread its branches, without any competition from other trees. Most of the big trees around Ford Park grow close together and are unable to spread so well. The tree forms part of the Ford Park logo used on this leaflet.

15 – Small-leaved Lime. Parallel lines of lime trees have been planted alongside the road to form an 'avenue'. Imagine what it will look like when they are full grown like the big sycamore tree. Walk up the avenue, but also look to the right, into the middle of the field. A small Blue Atlas Cedar, all on its own, will eventually grow to be as tall as the Hoad Monument!

16 – Holly – Hazel – Rowan – Ash. These young trees form a mixed hedge beside the car park. Use the shape of their leaves to tell them apart. The Holly bushes are easy, and the other small bushes are Hazel. The tall trees closest to the road are Rowans, but those further away are Ash. In autumn, Rowans bear red berries, while Ash bears winged seeds called 'keys'.

17 – Horse Chestnut – Sycamore – Ash. Again, use the shape of their leaves to tell them apart. Horse Chestnuts produce flowers in spring and 'conkers' in spiky cases in autumn. Sycamore and Ash both produce seeds that have 'wings' attached, to help the seeds to drift away from the 'parent' tree, giving them a chance to reach more open ground where they can grow.

Finish back at the Coach House café with something to eat and drink, then maybe check what vegetables are currently growing in the restored walled Victorian

Leaf shapes will help you identify trees on the trail



© Beech



Yew – Irish Yew



Laurel



Holly



© Oak



© Sycamore



Pine Cone



Cypress



© Birch



© Hazel



© Rowen



© Ash



© Horse Chestnut

In spring, some trees bear flowers or pollen-bearing catkins, while in autumn some trees bear fruit, nuts or berries. Deciduous trees lose all their leaves for the winter, while evergreens hold their leaves all the time. The images used above marked © are the copyright of Shaun Nixon and the Woodland Trust Photo Library.

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The biggest trees around Ford Park are probably no more than 160 years old, and were most likely planted around the same time that Ford House was built in the mid-19th century. The former orchard has been restored, while several young trees have been planted around the perimeter of the park for future generations to enjoy. Simply follow the numbers to enjoy this trail.

Other places around Ulverston where trees can be seen, identified and enjoyed include:

St Mary's Parish Church – Plenty of fine trees grow around the churchyard, which is very close to Ford Park.

Gill Banks – Where there are banks of evergreen laurel trees and mixed woodland with plenty of mature trees.

Swarthmoor Woods – A splendid riverside walk in a fine beech woodland managed by the Woodland Trust.

Conishead Priory – An exceptional mixed woodland full of mature trees explored using a fine network of paths.

Victoria Road – Identify trees while waiting for your bus.

Station Approach – Check trees near the railway station.

See the Woodland Trust Nature Detectives website for lots more interesting things to investigate and explore in Britain's woodlands www.naturedetectives.org.uk

This Tree Trail has been planned, mapped and marked by Ford Park volunteers. It is one of many projects operating around the park and we hope you enjoyed it.



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Ford Park Ulverston

So much more than a park

Tree Trail



A self-guided tree trail marked with numbered stones and information boards, starting at the Coach House café.