



The Tree Trail

A Warsash Common Walk

www.fareham.gov.uk/thetreetrail





The Tree Trail

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Introduction

The tree trail and poetry path have been designed to encourage people of all ages to take more advantage of our local natural environment. There are twelve native trees within the trail and individual information sheets offer everyone the opportunity to learn which tree is which, as well as facts about the ecology and botanical features, uses made of the wood and some of the superstitions and myths associated with them.

The poetry path runs parallel with the tree trail and incorporates poems and Haiku about the natural environment. They are written by local residents and pupils from schools within the Borough and there are six poetry posts and two poetry trees around the site. The poems are changed regularly to encourage those who write the poems, as well as friends and family, to walk the path, find their work and read the poems.

The tree trail and poetry path form a self-guided circular walk around the Warsash Common Local Nature Reserve which is approximately 1.5km in length. The terrain varies significantly but on the whole the paths are passible throughout the year. The walk incorporates a wide variety of different habitats which includes open grasslands, water bodies as well as wet and dry woodlands.

Acknowledgements

The council would like to thank the Jacqueline Memory Paterson estate for providing permission to extract information from her book Tree Wisdom. We would also like to thank the Woodland Trust for permission to use their graphics and providing the ecological information used in the fact sheets. Thanks also to Stormwatch for providing the Ogham information. Lastly, we would like to thank the National Trust. The poetry tree at Wordsworth's house in Cockermouth provided the inspiration for much of this project.



The Tree Trail



Poetry Path

PP - Poetry Post PT - Poetry Tree

Trees		
1 - Silver Birch	5 - Beech	9 - Hawthorn
2 - Willow	6 - Holly	10 - Oak
3 - Blackthorn	7 - Alder	11 - Yew
4 - Hazel	8 - Apple	12 - Ash

Walks Key

<p>Horse Route</p> <p> </p> <p>This is a walk of approximately 1.5km that takes in the main habitat types and landscapes. The walk is steep in places with steps, a bridge, gravel paths and boardwalks.</p>	<p>Route 1</p> <p></p> <p>This is a walk of approximately 1.5km that takes in the main habitat types and landscapes. The walk is steep in places with steps, a bridge, gravel paths and boardwalks.</p>	<p>Route 2</p> <p></p> <p>This walk is approximately three quarters of a kilometer which is predominately negotiable during the summer as the surfaces can be very wet in places.</p>	<p>Route 3</p> <p></p> <p>This is the easy access route which starts and ends in the car park off Dibles/New Road and circles the main common. This route is generally flat but can be wet during the winter in certain areas which may make it difficult for some types of wheelchair.</p>
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The Tree Trail

The Silver Birch (*Betula alba*)

Facts

- It can grow up to 30 meters tall
- It can live for up to 100 years
- It has both male and female flowers

Did you know?

- In Medieval times the branches were used to beat lunatics as it was thought the birch would drive out demons and bad spirits

Uses

- The bark is very hard wearing and was used to make hats to protect hill farmers in Snowdonia from bad weather
- It can be used to waterproof canoes





The Tree Trail

The Willow (*Salix sp.*)

Facts

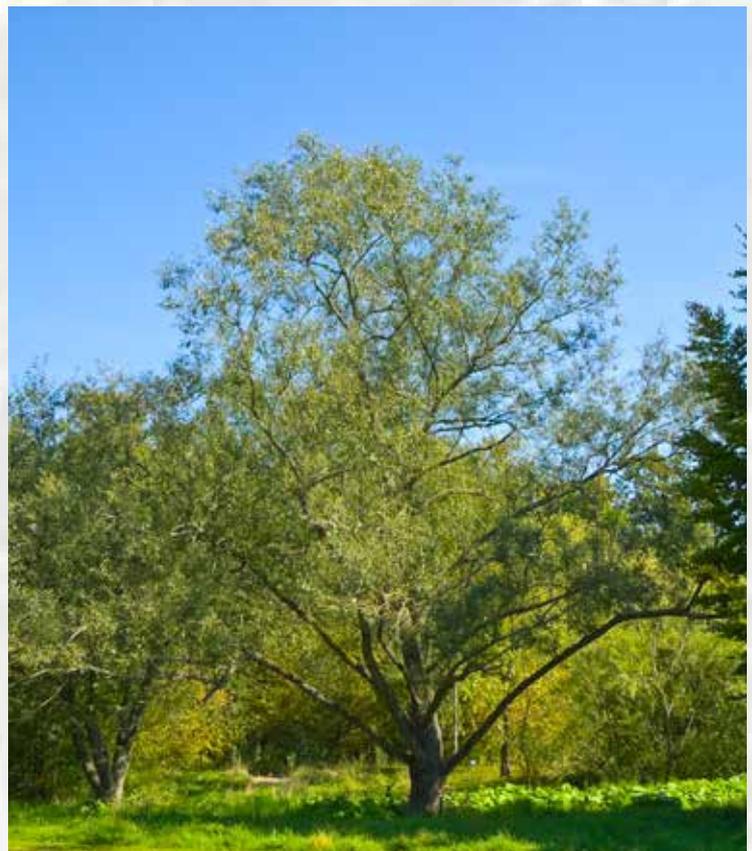
- There are various species of the willow including the weeping, white, crack and goat willow
- The white willow is the tallest and can grow up to 24 meters tall
- Willows are often found growing near water

Did you know?

- Christians traditionally placed branches of this tree in coffins before burial as it was believed that the willow helped ease the soul into the Heavens.

Uses

- It can be used to make cricket bats
- It can be used to make rake teeth, clothes pegs and weaving rods for baskets





The Tree Trail

The Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*)

Facts

- The name is associated with the very dark colour of the bark and the long thorns
- It is often the first tree to blossom
- The five-petal flower can look like a covering of snow



Did you know?

- During the 15th and 16th centuries it was believed that the devil would prick those he wished to work with and many women thought to be witches were stripped and their body searched for 'the devil's mark'. If found guilty they were burnt on a pyre of blackthorn.

Uses

- The fruit of the blackthorn is used to make jelly and sloe gin
- The branches were often cut to make the teeth for rakes and small pieces of furniture



The Tree Trail

The Hazel (*Corylus avellana*)

Facts

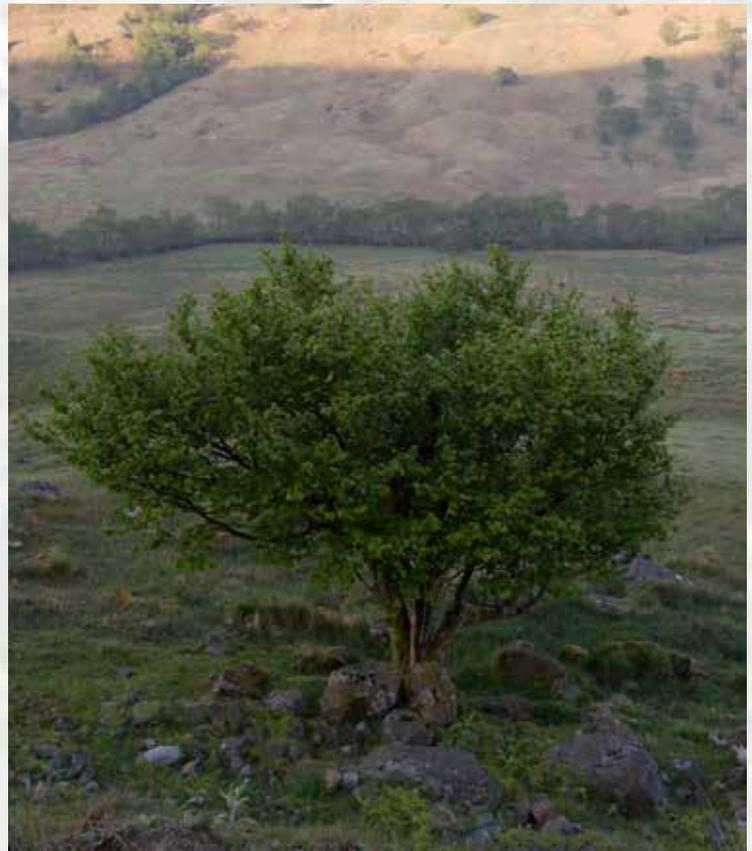
- It can grow up to 12 metres tall
- The Hazelnuts ripen in the early autumn
- The flowers or catkins are often seen in January

Did you know?

- To prevent toothache, some people would carry a double hazelnut in their pocket.

Uses

- It can be used to make walking sticks
- It has been used for clothes props and pegs





The Tree Trail

The Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*)

Facts

- It is known as the Mother of the Woods
- It grows well on chalky soils
- It can reach the height of up to 42 metres

Did you know?

- During Medieval times, sailors and soldiers would cut a small piece of beech, scratch a wish on it and then bury it in a holy place

Uses

- Beech nuts are very nutritious and can be eaten by humans and animals
- The wood is used to make small pieces of furniture
- Traditional shipbuilders would use the wood when constructing the keel





The Tree Trail

The Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*)

Facts

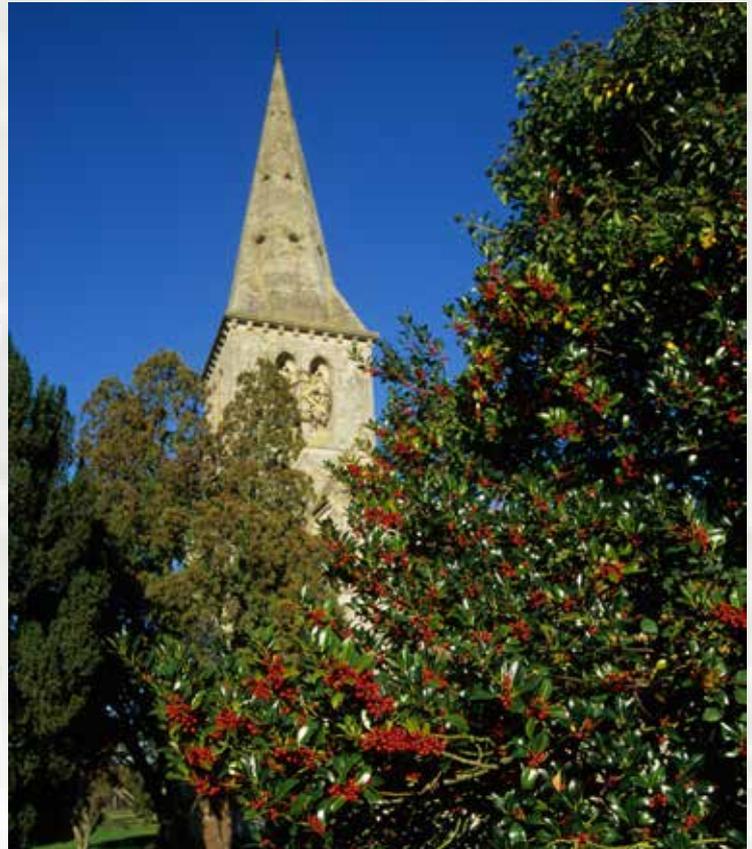
- It can grow up to 15 meters tall
- There are both male and female trees which bloom in May
- The berries are ripe by September

Did you know?

- Holly is believed to be very lucky for single men and if a leaf or berry is carried by them it would attract a woman

Uses

- It can be stained or dyed very well
- During the Victorian period it was used to make handles for cutlery





The Tree Trail

The Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*)

Facts

- Grows well near water
- The male flowers are a rich purple or red colour
- The female flowers grow in small clusters and are green and cone like in shape
- It is very durable

Did you know...

- It used to be believed that the sap from the Alder was the blood of the fairies and many were considered sacred and it was forbidden to cut them down

Uses

- The Alder has been used to make clogs
- It was used as supports to construct bridges
- The sap is used to dye wool and cotton



The Tree Trail

The Crab Apple (*Malus sylvestris*)

Facts

- It is the only indigenous form of apple tree in the UK
- It is another member of the rose family
- It has thorns

Did you know...

- Cutting an apple and counting the pips was used as a way to foretell a marriage. If the number of pips were even, then a marriage would be inevitable. If the number were uneven the person would remain unmarried for quite some time.

Uses

- Cloves would be stuck into apples and used as an air freshener
- The juice from the apples can be made into vinegar, conserves and jellies
- The wood was used to make handles of tools and knives





The Tree Trail

The Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*)

Facts

- It is part of the rose family
- There are two main species; the Midland and the Common variety
- The common variety has a white flower and the Midland variety has a pink flower

Did you know?

- The Hawthorn has been seen as the tree of protection and some fishermen would take a twig to sea to protect them from bad weather

Uses

- The bark was used to make black dye
- The leaves have been used by the Scottish to make tea
- The flowers can be used to make wine





The Tree Trail

The English / Pendunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*)

Facts

- It can grow up to 40 metres tall
- It can live well over 600 years
- The first full crop of seeds may not be seen for up to 40 years

Did you know?

- For many years, people believed that carrying an acorn would bring luck, sustain youth and ensure a healthy life

Uses

- It has been used to construct ships
- The bark is used to dye wool
- Tudor houses were constructed from oak frames





The Tree Trail

The Yew (*Taxus baccata*)

Facts

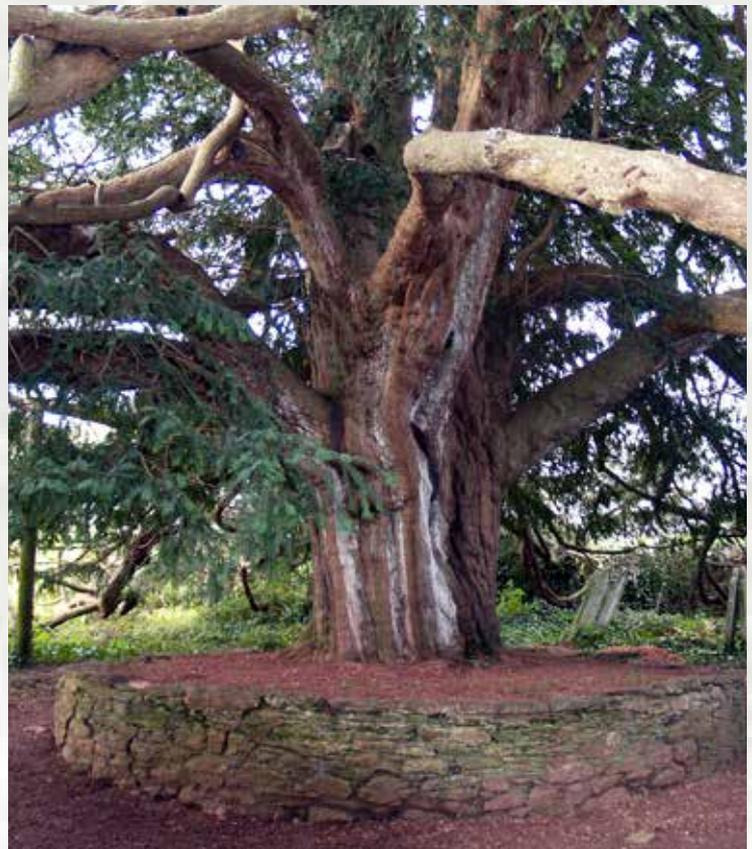
- Some trees can live up to 2000 years
- It is one of the most poisonous trees in the UK
- It is the only coniferous tree that doesn't have a cone

Did you know?

- It was considered unlucky to let branches that had been damaged by lightning or high winds to be left on land as it was believed that the negative spirit of the storm remained in the branches

Uses

- It was used to make long bows
- Yew was used to make dowsing rods





The Tree Trail

The Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*)

Facts

- It can grow up to 45.5 meters tall
- It can live over 100 years
- The fruit is known as 'wings' or 'helicopters'

Did you know...

- The Vikings thought that the Ash held a magical spirit and was used for their long boats and weapons

Uses

- It can be used to make basket frames, fence panels and cross bows
- During WWII the wood was used to make frames for planes like the Spitfire

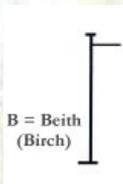




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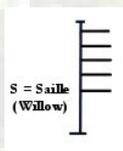
Introduction

There are thirteen moons in a year and whilst there is no written evidence, it is believed that the Celts (750BC - 12BC), were the first to establish what has become known as the lunar tree calendar using the ancient Irish alphabet also known as the Ogham symbols. Each moon phase was assigned a corresponding tree, each tree being sacred to either feminine energy and to a goddess, or to masculine energy and to a god. The trees that were selected were sources of magic and myth in Celtic folklore. Several of the trees are said to be attractive to faery folk, and others were sources of magic herbs or medicines.



Silver Birch – *Betula pendula* / Ogham – Beith

The birch is the first tree in the calendar. In Celtic mythology the birch symbolised renewal and purification with birch twigs being used to drive out the spirits of the old year. It is a tree of great life giving properties and is always associated with new beginnings, physical and spiritual.



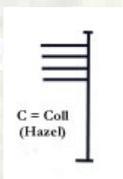
Willow – *Salix sp* / Ogham - Saille

Known as 'the tree of enchantment', the willow is a strong power in this system. In all her seasons and shapes the tree is a potent symbol of grief. It is used for healing and help in grief and death.



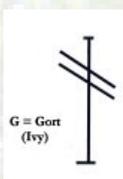
Blackthorn – *Prunus spinosa* / Ogham – Straif

This is a tree of profound magical tradition. It is used for banishing negativity and raising awareness and energy. The trees are an ancient, native species and the fruits were eaten by early man. There's evidence that the Blackthorn was used in Iron Age communities c3400 yrs ago.



Hazel – *Corylus avellana* / Ogham - Coll

Celtic culture notes that the hazel has the ability to connect the conscious with the unconscious and is good for bringing ideas to the surface and for transforming dreams into reality. It is associated with wisdom and knowledge, with meditation and an ability to increase psychic abilities and intuition. Coppicing the many trunks was also believed to provide a strong link to the earth.



Beech - Not an Ogham tree. Many trees have Ivy which is part of the Ogham

Ivy- *Hedera Helix* / Ogham - Gort Ivy represents the search for the self, and the wandering spirit of the Ivy can either restrict and bind or unite. It is associated both with freedom and attachment. Many of the trees have Ivy growing up them which may not harm them but provides an important habitat for wildlife.

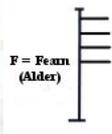


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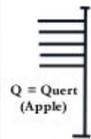
Holly – *Ilex aquifolium* / Ogham – Tinne

The evergreen Holly is a masculine tree and a symbol of potent life energy. It is used to help restore direction and balance in life and unites the past with the present. It is believed to bring love and compassion and is a tree of protection. The energy of Holly was used to heal a broken heart.



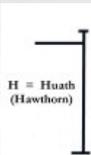
Alder – *Alnus glutinosa* / Ogham - Fearn

The magic of the alder is believed to span the space between earth, water, with its roots in the two elements and the tree never stands far from water. It is the magical tree of Bran, King of the Celts. It is seen to help with physical and spiritual protection. It also gives courage and eases mental fear and doubt.



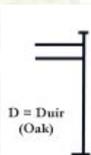
Crab Apple – *Malus sylvestris* / Ogham - Quert

Native crab apples were found in the remains of a bronze-age burial grounds and cultivated varieties were brought with the Roman ships. Under Celtic lore, the apples are good for spiritual healing and protection and seen as a symbol of rejuvenation, love and immortality.



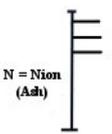
Hawthorn – *Crataegus monogyna* – Ogham - Huath

Hawthorn has the ability to open the heart to spiritual growth and love. The Hawthorn is good for reliving stress and releasing blocked energy and also creates the ability to trust and let go of fear. It also is good for cleansing and protection.



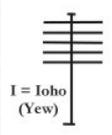
Oak – *Quercus robor* / Ogham - Duir

The oak, known as the 'king of trees' is probably the most well known and best loved tree in Britain. One of our longest living and largest trees has seen it used as a symbol of strength and duration. The most sacred tree of the Druids it is seen as a doorway to inner spirituality. It restores the will and determination that may have become weakened in times of stress and will lead to the truth.



Ash – *Fraxinus excelsior* / Ogham - Nion

The ash tree – Yggdrasil (pronounced igg-drah-sill with emphasis on the first syllable) is also known as the tree of life or the Great World Tree in the mythology of Odin and is revered and full of magic. The only one of the olive family (apart from privet) that is native to Britain, it is used for protection and to enhance courage before going to sea.



Yew – *Taxus baccata* / Ogham - Iohadh

The yew is the last of the tree Ogham system. It is believed to offer knowledge about rebirth and transformation. It also offers access to the ancestors and spirit realms.





Haiku Poems - Name That Tree

1. No faeries will bite
While her bark shines bright
Bind her branches tight and fly off tonight.
2. The Druids gave strength and mettle
To soldiers about to cross metal
There's a score they need to settle!
3. Dye your cap with my sap,
Make your clogs from my logs,
But beware there's marsh where I grow.
4. Strung up from on high
Odin chose to die but
Did this tree set his spirit free?
5. Where I grow, water does flow.
Knock on my wood and
Your luck will be good.
6. The blossom's white, the bark is dark;
But beware the thorn,
For it leaves the Devil's mark.

Answers: 1. Silver Birch, 2. The Yew, 3. The Alder, 4. The Ash, 5. The Willow, 6. The Blackthorn.





Haiku Poems - Name That Tree

7. Beneath these boughs you took your vows
You feed your sows
And preached your gospels many.

8. Grow with coal, pass our bowl,
And bless her soul
If she is to bear fruit a'plenty.

9. The Mother she stood
Deep in the wood
Watching her leaves as they follow the sun.

10. Protected when at sea
For he carried this tree and
From the leaves he brewed himself tea.

11. My wood was poor man's ivory.
Prickly leaves which make skin sore.
Smooth leaves ensure women's law.

12. A twig to find your water
A stick to herd your sheep
A nut to bring you knowledge.

Answers: 1. The Oak, 2. The Crab Apple, 3. The Beech, 4. The Hazel, 5. The Holly, 6. The Hawthorn, 7. The Crab Apple, 8. The Beech, 9. The Hawthorn, 10. The Oak, 11. The Holly, 12. The Hazel.





Trees in Medicine

Introduction

From 'folk medicine' to 'official medicine' and from early herbal medicine to homeopathy, trees have played their part in developing a better understanding and science of which species is best for which ailment.

The enormous variety of appropriate vegetation across the world has influenced many different cultures and whilst man-made pharmaceuticals dominate our medicines today, it is worth stopping for a moment and looking at what our ancestors did to develop a better understanding of how nature was used to help cure a variety of ailments in our everyday lives.

Please note, readers should take advice from a qualified doctor or herbalist before using plants as a cure for ailments.





Silver Birch

The bark, leaf and sap have been and continue to be used in different forms of medicine.

Sap

The sap is best extracted in the spring as it begins to rise but it does not store well. This seasonal fluid was used in early folk medicine to prevent stones in the kidneys or bladder and for treating rheumatic diseases. It was and continues to be used by herbalists to improve skin complexion and reduce acne.

Leaf

The leaves were stewed and made into a tea which was then prescribed as a diuretic, to relieve rheumatism and to dissolve kidney stones.

Another cure for rheumatism and arthritic pain involved placing a layer of leaves inside a warm bed. This induces a heavy sweat which brings relief to the joints.

Bark

The bark contains a natural anesthetic and in early medicine it was applied to the skin to relieve muscle pain. This was popular among the agricultural communities especially around harvest time.

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Willow

As with the Silver Birch, the sap has been used seasonally and both the leaf and bark have healing properties.

Sap

Early physicians prescribed the sap as a cure for dimness and soreness of the eyes. However, the sap was only tapped when the tree was in flower.

Leaf

The leaf and the bark both contain salic acid which is a painkiller and the primary component of aspirin (see below).

A decoction of both leaf and bark was and still is prescribed by herbalists to eradicate dandruff. It can be rubbed into the scalp before the final rinse.

Lastly, the leaves can be wrapped in a warm damp cloth and applied to the feet to relieve a fever. This was particularly popular among the agricultural communities and prescribed by herbalist working in medieval monasteries.

Bark

The bark is high in tannin which is particularly sharp to the palate. However, this did not stop the gypsies using it to make a tea which was ingested by those suffering with rheumatism, influenza and headaches.

Salic acid is more concentrated in the bark than the leaf and was first discovered in 1860. It has since been synthesized and produced to make aspirin.

The bark was also used to make an incense. Modern homeopaths prescribe it as a healing aid for those suffering deep emotional problems as it clears the head and uplifts the spirits.

It is still used by herbalists to relieve fevers, headaches and painful joints. It has been found that the natural salic acids in the bark produces pain relief without any of the side effects of aspirin, such as irritation of the gut.





Blackthorn

The sap, leaf and bark have not been used in folk or traditional medicine to date. However, the tree has significant healing properties for spiritual healers and is used to cleanse the soul and re-establish mental and spiritual balance.

Fruit

During the 17th and 18th centuries, early physicians would recommend making a brew of unripe sloes to cure 'fluxes in the belly'. This would have been a particularly caustic remedy as the fluid would be extremely acidic.

The high level of natural acids, even in the ripe fruit, saw herbalists and early physicians use it to 'burn off' warts. The fruit was rubbed into a wort and then tossed over the shoulder in the belief that the cause of the wart would go with it.

On a more practical note, ripe sloe juice was prescribed to alleviate women suffering excessive menstruation.

Flower

It is the flowers that are most often used medicinally, usually in the form of infusions for their laxative, diuretic and anti-inflammatory effects.

Research at the University of Łódź in Poland revealed that the flowers contain the flavonoid glycoside quercetin, which has anti-inflammatory properties.

They also contain kaempferol, another flavonoid that in preclinical studies has been found to reduce the risk of developing some forms of cancer and cardiovascular diseases. Research work is ongoing.

Flavonoids

These are various compounds found naturally in many fruits and vegetables. They are phytoestrogens, meaning that they are chemicals that act like the hormone oestrogen.

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Apple

There is no record of the sap being used in medicine, but the leaf and the fruit are packed full of therapeutic elements which include the sugars, amino-acids, vitamins, pectin and mineral salts.

Leaf

The leaves contain up to 2.4% of an antibacterial substance called fluorine. This is rare in nature but when man-made it forms the basis of anaesthetics, antibiotics, anti-cancer and anti-inflammatory agents. This inhibits the growth of a number of gram-positive and gram-negative bacteria in a low concentration (30 ppm). Gram-positive bacteria are not usually found in the human body. That means they are more easily recognised and targeted by the immune system. Gram negative bacterial cells often have labels on their cell wall, called 'antigens', which allow the human body to recognise them. If the cell has a capsule or slime covering, as gram-negative bacteria do, these antigens are hidden from the immune system. So, the immune system cannot target the infective bacteria.

Bark

The bark, and especially the root bark, contains anthelmintic elements which when isolated can be used to expel parasitic worms (helminths) and other internal parasites from the body. It is also used to induce sleep (see below). An infusion is still used by herbalists as a treatment for fevers.

Fruit

The fruit can be acidic and used as a laxative. The crushed fruit pulp can be used in a poultice to heal inflammations or small flesh wounds.

They are best eaten first thing in the morning or last thing at night. Herbalists advise those women experiencing morning sickness to grate the fruit and eat it in the morning. The fruit also encourages sleep when eaten before going to bed.

In early folk medicine the fruit was used to clear warts in much the same way as the sloe. Two halves of an apple were rubbed into the wort. The remains were buried and left to decay during which time the wart would disappear.

Lastly, raw apple was used to reduce inflammation of the eyes, aches and pains and to speed up the healing of significant wounds. To do this, the fruit was soaked in boiling water for a while. Any excess was drained off and the remainder of the flesh was put between two layers of material (a poultice) and applied to the affected area.





Yew

This is a very poisonous tree and must not be self-administered.

There is no record of the sap being used in any forms of medicine. However, the taxol which can be found in the leaves and the bark have made a significant impact on modern day cancer treatment.

Leaf & Bark

During the 20th century, pharmacologists found that taxol, created by the Yew can inhibit cell division. During the 1980's investigations intensified and progress was made into its use against cancer. It now plays an important part in the treatment of ovarian and breast cancer.

The young leaves contain a small amount of taxol but there is more in the bark. For some time the yew trees in the USA were being stripped of their bark and huge swathes were dying. The Yew is now a protected species and more effort is being put into developing a synthetic substitute.

Fruit

One of the most poisonous elements of the tree is the seed within the berry. This applies to man and animals. Nevertheless, the flesh of the berry combined with young tree shoots is used by homeopaths to treat cystitis, headaches, neuralgia, some heart conditions, gout and rheumatism.

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Oak

The oak tree, like the Silver Birch has a wide range of healing qualities, none of which includes the sap.

Leaf

In folk medicine, the young leaf buds were prepared in distilled water and drunk to relieve inflammations of the stomach and other major organs.

Externally, bruised leaves were applied to wounds and haemorrhoids to reduce swelling.

Bark

The bark of this tree has been used for medicinal purposes more than any other component.

Bark which has been ground into a fine powder, has long been used like snuff to stop nosebleeds. This powder was sprinkled on bed linen to reduce the discomfort created by bedsores.

A strong decoction of the bark (chopped bark boiled in water) may be used to cure chronic diarrhoea. A slightly less concentrated mixture can be rinsed around the mouth to stop bleeding gums or gargled to reduce inflammation of the throat and the mucous membranes in the mouth.

Fruit

Rather ironically, a decoction of acorns and bark, ground and added to milk was given as a remedy for poisoning from plants and unreliable medicines.

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Hawthorn

There is no evidence to suggest that the sap has been used to cure or prevent illness in folk or official medicine. Moreover, the leaf and bark have not been adopted widely. However, the flower and berries have been used to good effect through much of the 20th century.

Leaf

In Scotland the leaves were used to make a tea and drunk to alleviate sore throats.

Bark

In Ireland the bark was chewed to reduce the discomfort associated with toothache.

Flower & Berries

Both have been used as a heart tonic. In the 19th century, an Irish doctor called Dr Green, identified that the flowers contain a series of natural elements which act as a sedative, an anti-spasmodic and diuretic. Dr Green's findings have been developed throughout the 20th century and the findings have led to it being used by homeopaths as a natural regulator of arterial blood pressure (high and low), as a treatment for congestive heart failure and as a valuable heart stimulant. The lack of toxicity within the tree as a whole means that the medication can be used over protracted periods without fear of any negative side effects.

During the 16th and 17th centuries the berries or 'haws' were skinned and stoned. The flesh was then mixed into a thick paste and ingested to treat diabetes. This paste could also be added to cider or wine and drunk to ease kidney stones.

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