

# Ilkley Tree Trails #5

## Ben Rhydding



*Printing thanks to Wharfedale Naturalists Society*

This 1.6km/1 mile long trail which starts at St John's Church, Bolling Road, takes around 80 minutes and visits 45 tree species. On the back page is a map with the location of each tree.

The booklet and map can be viewed and downloaded from [ilkleytrees.org.uk](http://ilkleytrees.org.uk).  
If following the trail on your phone, it is useful to take a printed copy of the map

**Introduction:** The trail trees are in the central area of Ben Rhydding, a historic eastern part of Ilkley, with some fine old houses & gardens, and its own rail station which opened to passengers in 1866 to serve clients of the huge - now long-gone - local hydrotherapy establishment. After **directions** on how to locate each tree, **information** is given on popular and scientific names, summary appearance & background info, key distinguishing features and other points of interest. For some common species, other examples along the route may be mentioned again because of a notable feature or location. Further info can be found in various print and online publications listed at the end of this booklet. Also provided is a short **glossary** of some *common technical terms* (shown in *italics*) used in the descriptions for those not (yet) familiar with 'tree-speak'. **Note:** all trees are native, broadleaf & deciduous unless otherwise stated.

Park kerbside on Margerison Road adjacent to St John's Church near the eastern end of Bolling Road. Just right of the small church side entrance is a #1 and to the left a row of five #2

### 1. Common Lime *Tilia x europaea* (European Lime)

Natural hybrid of Broad-leaved Lime (BLL *Tilia platyphyllos*) and Small-leaved Lime (SLL *Tilia cordata*). It is widely planted as a street tree (where it may be lopped each year) and in parks and gardens (to 46m). Its bark is dull pale grey with irregular ridges. The very large, dark green, *cordate*, *flimsy*, lopsided and slightly shiny leaves have buff tufts of hairs on the underside vein joints (SLL leaves have more *rufous* tufts and LLL leaves are hairy all over). Many shoots (suckers) sprout from large burrs at its base. It is highly attractive to aphids whose honeydew secretion drips down from leaves and is eaten by bees. In autumn the leaves turn pale yellow. They are often covered in small, red, conical warts (Nail Galls made by a small gall mite *Eriophyes tiliae*) which the other 2 species don't get as often. Flowers and later downy, faintly-ribbed fruits droop down in clusters of 4-10 (in SLL they are hairless and stick out in all directions).



### 2. Common Whitebeam *Sorbus aria*

Native (to S England), medium-sized (to 15m), compact, domed, broadleaf tree rarely seen in the wild, but widely planted as a popular ornamental tree in parks & gardens. It has smooth, grey bark, and shoots which are brick red in the sun and greyish-green in shade. Its thick, shiny, dark green leaves are oval, pointed, & irregularly toothed with a soft white (because hairy) underside, and turn russet in autumn. It bears lovely, white, clustered, insect-pollinated flowers followed by scarlet berries, ripening late summer/autumn and loved by birds. Its hard, white, fine-grained timber was used for wood-turning, joinery, chairs, beams, cogs & wheels.



Cross over Margerison Road and walk west along Bolling Rd past a couple of large #18 and a #3 in the garden of No.94 to the corner of Manley Rd, where there is a fine old #4 known locally as the Manley Oak. Continue until opposite the bus stop then carefully cross over the busy road to see a #5 on the edge of the field and growing through the hedge to the right. Continue a little further to see the mature #6 on the pavement just before the new telecomms mast.

**3. Corkscrew Hazel** *Corylus avellana* 'Contorta' (Harry Lauder's walking stick) Non-native, slow-growing, large shrub (to 4m) with curiously contorted stems and twisted branches making it popular as a garden feature. These are most noticeable during winter when the broadly ovate leaves have fallen. Pendant yellow male catkins 'heralds of spring' appear in late winter and early spring, releasing copious pollen to fertilise the tiny deep red female flowers.



**4. English Oak** *Quercus robur* (Common or Pedunculate Oak) Iconic, large (to 40m) and irregularly-domed tree with massive lower branches. It is the dominant British woodland tree and also widely planted. It supports some 2,300 wildlife species - more than any other native tree. Greyish bark becomes deeply fissured with age, which can reach 1,000 years - Ilkley's Stubham Oak is ~500 years old. Distinctively deeply lobed leaves are attached close to the stem behind small 'ears' and grow in bunches. The familiar autumnal acorns grow on stalks or 'peduncles' unlike with the Sessile Oak - with which it often forms natural hybrids. Acorns are highly prized by both people (as pig fodder) and wildlife (stored as winter food). Its hard, durable timber was traditionally used for building ships and houses, and is still used to make furniture.



**5. Field Maple** *Acer campestre*

UK's only native maple, this widespread, small-medium (to 25m) sturdy tree, is found in hedgerows and woodland edges, widely planted in parks and gardens, and can live for >500 years. Otherwise inconspicuous, it is revealed in autumn when its shiny, dark green *palmately* and bluntly-lobed leaves (easily distinguishing it from Sycamore and Norway maple) turn golden yellow and typical maple fruits, large straight-winged (samaras), develop in pendulous clusters. Its light brown flaky bark becomes corky with age. It supports caterpillars, aphids, and their predators, and resists air pollution. Its hard, dense strong creamy-brown timber is used for wood-turning, carving, furniture, flooring and musical instruments, especially harps.



**6. Siberian Elm** *Ulmus pumila* (Asiatic or Dwarf Elm)

Introduced from N & E Asia c.1860, this large, fast-growing but short-lived, broadly upright, tree (to 30m) has a willow-like rough bark with a coarse network of scaly brown ridges. Dark-green, glossy, small, slender, hairless leaves are rough, oval with a pointed tip, jagged-toothed, generally symmetrical at the base and turn yellow in late autumn. Tiny red wind-pollinated flowers are produced in early spring followed by papery-winged, flat, green fruit. Small, glossy, ovoid, dark to red-brown winter buds appear at leaf stem bases.



Walk back east crossing Manley Rd, then along the side of the primary school, passing a line of nine #1, to the school gates, where on the nearby pavement is a #7, to the right of the gates a #8 and next to it a #9.

### 7. Common Pear *Pyrus communis*

Introduced c.995 from Europe/W Asia, this dome-crowned tree is found widely in parks & gardens (to 20m). The 'crocodile skin' grey-brown bark is split into small knobby squares. Spiky branches bear alternate, variably oval, pointed leaves with finely & roundly toothed edges and long stalks. Glossy leathery dark green in spring, turn gold then black in autumn. Creamy-white flowers cover the tree in early spring and after insect- or self-pollination, the typical fruits develop on long stalks ripening to a golden yellow. There are >3,000 cultivars of which <50 are commercially cultivated.



### 8. Norway Maple *Acer platanoides*

Introduced from mainland Europe in 1683, this vigorous, handsome, domed tree is now abundant and well naturalised, tolerating urban pollution (to 25m). Its grey bark has regular shallow grooves. Slender shiny brown shoots have tiny white spots. Elegant, dark green, opposite leaves are *palmate* having 5 lobes with a few long pointed teeth (most with whisker tips) and fade to yellow and occasionally red before falling in autumn. Leaves are more spikey than sycamore and field maple and are also hairless, except for tufts under leaf joints. Leaf stalks ooze a milky sap if squeezed. Insect-pollinated, scented, small, yellow female flowers produce paired samaras with a wider angle than sycamore but narrower than field maple. Its weak wood means branches may break off in strong winds.



### 9. Purple Norway Maple *Acer platanoides* 'Crimson King'

A decorative purple variety of #10 tolerant of compacted soils, shade and pollution, widely grown as an ornamental tree in streets, parks & gardens. Distinctive leaves are deep purple/crimson through spring/summer turning orange/brown in autumn. It suffers from bark stripping by grey squirrels.



Carry on east along Bolling Rd passing a couple of 'bastards' - a #10 in corner of the school garden and a #11 on the pavement - then another #1, continuing up to St John's Rd where around the corner in the garden you will find a #12.

### 10. False Acacia *Robinia pseudoacacia* (Bastard Acacia, Black Locust)

Introduced from USA, this fast-growing, broadly columnar tree (to 25m) popular for ornamental planting is also naturalising through suckers. It has deeply furrowed grey-brown, rough bark and twin sharp spines at the base of some leaves on twigs and suckers. Dark green pinnate leaves comprise 5-11 pairs of oval untoothed leaflets and turn pale yellow in autumn. Each leaflet has a soft bristle at its rounded tip with its tiny notch. It bears dense, cascading clusters of beautiful, slightly scented, white acacia-like flowers in late spring and summer, followed in autumn by smooth, dark-brown, pea-like pods with 4-10 seeds.



### 11. Bastard Service *Sorbus thuringiaca* 'Fastigiata' (Hybrid Whitebeam)

This erect variant of a natural hybrid of Common Rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*) and Common Whitebeam (*Sorbus aria*) is planted as a good street tree (to 18m). It is compact and upright, growing upwards and outwards with close, erect branches to form a 'lollipop' head. Glossy dark-green leaves resemble Whitebeam but are narrower, have 2-4 free leaflets on stronger shoots at the base, and a grey woolly underside. They turn yellow-brown in autumn. Clusters of white flowers are followed by glossy spherical red berries, a favourite winter food for birds.



### 12. Blue Colorado Spruce *Picea pungens* f. *glauca*

Introduced from USA c.1862, this attractive, slow-growing, evergreen conifer, is common in parks & larger gardens (to 12m). It has sharply pointed ('pungent'), stiff, upright, bright silver-blue needles which spread all round most shoots but with more above. They tend to curve forward and up and are covered in a glaucous wax, which gives the tree its characteristic colour. Cylindrical green cones turn pale brown as they ripen. Tiers of horizontal branches form a conical shape that becomes more columnar as the tree grows. Many other cultivars are available, especially dwarf forms.



Continue past another #11 just before the shops to the end of Bolling Rd then around the corner onto Wheatley Lane passing a #13 just before Wheatley Hall. Continue down under the railway bridge passing 2 large #18 and a #16 before cutting across to admire a large #14.1 at the end of Cardan Drive

### 13. Copper Beech *Fagus sylvatica* *purpurea*

Non-native, this distinctive and dramatic tree is an ornamental cultivar of the Common Beech (see #14) often planted in landscape-scale gardens as a specimen tree. Its oval leaves are deep purple in the spring, turning to a coppery hue in the autumn, and are fringed with silky brown hairs.



### 14. Common Beech *Fagus sylvatica* (aka 'the Queen of British Trees')

Dominant in SE England & SE Wales, it is widely planted in woods, gardens & parks elsewhere, and popular for hedges & screens. Mature trees are majestic, branching low and growing to >40m with a huge domed crown. It keeps many of its dead leaves throughout winter (marcescence). Beech woodland is shady with a thick carpet of fallen leaves & mast husks which prevent plant growth, except for (often rarer) shade-tolerant plants which can survive beneath the dense canopy. Its smooth, grey bark is ideal for carving, often attracting graffiti. It has distinctive, reddish-brown, long, thin 'torpedo' buds with overlapping scales. Leaves are smooth & broadly elliptical with wavy margins & bluntly pointed tips. Lustrous pale green young leaves also have hairy edges & turn darker thro summer then rich russet/golden brown in autumn. Small, yellow-green spring flowers produce edible triangular autumn nut pairs in a bristly husk ('mast') . . . (continues)



14.1 The fine specimen here is 21m high and has a girth (circumference at 1.3m above base) of 3.2m. It has been *pollarded* in the past to provide animal fodder or wood, but now is done to keep trees at a desired height. It also makes trees live longer by keeping them partially juvenile and by reducing the weight & wind resistance of the upper tree.

14.2 This huge 24.8m tall church beech with a girth of ~5.34m was also pollarded long ago.



The Cardan Drive beech

Church beech massive trunk



Return to and carefully cross the busy Wheatley Lane, and after noting a mature #4 further down the lane, turn right and walk back up the lane where on the left is a group of #15 and, at the foot of the rail embankment, a 21m high #16.

### 15. Lawson Cypress *Chamaecyparis lawsoniana*

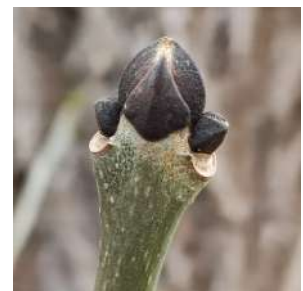
Non-native (introduced from California in 1854) large (up to 45m), long-lived (up to 600 years) conical - with a drooping top stalk (if left to mature) - ornamental or hedging evergreen widely planted in churchyards, parks and gardens. A wide selection of cultivars have leaf colours from green to yellow to blue. It has also naturalised along damp banks and woodland edges. It has small, scale-like leaves have a pungent parsley smell if crushed. Fruits are round pea-sized cones with broad scales. Its bark is shiny, purplish-brown, spongy and develops vertical fissured long plates with age. The abundant feathery foliage in flat sprays provides a popular bird roosting & nesting site. Its rot-resistant timber is used in Japan for coffins, shrines & temples. Leylandii is similar but has much larger cones (up to 2cm diam)



Drooping top

### 16. Common Ash *Fraxinus excelsior*

This tall (to 35m), domed, tough & fast-growing tree colonises areas easily, occupying space where other trees have died or fallen. A good forest tree, its airy *canopy* lets light reach the floor & allows other plants to flourish. It grows naturally in woods and is widely planted in towns, parks & churchyards. It is particularly common in the N & Wales (up to 12% of broadleaved woodland) as it prefers damp, fertile soils & cooler weather. Easily recognised by compound (*pinnate*) leaves with 7-12 serrated oval leaflets which fall early while still green, large sooty black buds, and dangling bunches of autumn ash 'keys' - winged seeds that fall in winter/early spring and are dispersed by birds & animals. Its bark, smooth and grey when young, later develops a vertical, usually regular network of shallow interwoven ridges. Its shock-absorbing wood is good for oars, floors, sports bats, sticks & rackets, skis & tool handles. Sadly it is being devastated by ash (Chalara) dieback, a lethal fungal disease which blocks water transport causing leaves, branches & crown to die-back. Up to 99% of all ash may die, permanently changing the landscape.



Pass back under the rail bridge, then turn left onto Cheltenham Ave where up on your left are two large #17 (~23m tall), several mature #18 (~20m tall) and - in between these - a large #19.

**17. Horse Chestnut** *Aesculus hippocastanum* (unrelated to the Sweet Chestnut)

Non-native, large tree (to 40m) living up to 300 years. Introduced from Turkey in 1616, it is now very common in parks, village greens & city streets. Easily recognised by its leaves, sticky red-brown buds, spectacular spring flowers, and autumn 'conkers'. Its bark is smooth, pinky-grey when young and with age darkens & develops scaly plates. Compound *palmate* leaves have 5-7 stalkless leaflets. Flowers are large, upright, cone-shaped 'candles' (panicles), which start yellow then turn pink/red after bee pollination - they only visit unpollinated flowers as they can see red but not yellow. The fruit is the familiar large, shiny brown conkers in a green spiny case.



**18. Sycamore** *Acer pseudoplatanus*

Non-native, very common, large tree (to 35m) in the Maple family with the typical leaf and winged fruit which can live for 400 years. Native to C & S Europe, it was possibly introduced by the Romans or in the 1500s. Growing naturally, it colonises woodland by seeding freely, providing food and shelter for wildlife including aphids which leave a sticky honeydew deposit. Its bark is dark pinky-grey when young; with age it becomes cracked & develops small plates. Large, 5-lobed *palmate* leaves have many coarse, round-tipped teeth, and stalks are characteristically red in younger trees. Small, green-yellow, flowers hang in spikes (*racemes*), are pollinated by wind & insects and produce distinctive, abundant, 2-winged 'helicopter' *samaras* (aids wind dispersal) with a narrower angle than other maples. It can be confused with the Field Maple (*Acer campestre*) and the Norway Maple (*Acer platanoides*) but leaves, flowers and fruit differ.



**19. Swedish Whitebeam** *Sorbus intermedia*

Non-native, medium-sized (to 12m), tough, bushy Baltic hybrid with a broad dense *canopy* widely grown ornamentally in N Europe. Valued for tolerance of urban conditions, it is common in streets & parks and often becomes naturalised. Its stout trunk with largely smooth grey bark, has nearly horizontal branches which bear distinctive *serrated* leaves like Common Whitebeam but with a more oak-like shape and grey woolly (densely hairy) underside. Clusters of creamy white spring flowers are followed by autumn scarlet berries eaten by birds which disperse the seeds.



Continue up the avenue for 150m passing a pair of #20 in the grassy area on your left, then a #39 to reach a #21 and a pair of #22

**20. Orchard Apple** *Malus pumila* (*M. domestica*) (Cultivated Apple)

Originating from a wild C. Asia species, cultivation began >2,000 years ago. The original ancestor has been improved through selective cross-breeding with >2,200 varieties recorded in UK producing fruit for eaters, cooks - and to make cider. Most cultivars are propagated by clonal grafting onto root stocks. A low, wide tree (to 10m) with greyish, often bumpy/ridged, scaly bark, it is abundant in gardens & orchards with wildings found in scrub and along roads & railways. Dark matt green, *serrated*, typically oval leaves are slightly furry or woolly underneath. Stunning clusters of blossom - white, from pink buds - appear in May & June, producing the familiar green-red sweet or sour fruit. It may hybridise with the native Crab Apple (*M.sylvestris*)



**21. Sweet Chestnut** *Castanea sativa*

Brought to Britain from Europe by the Romans, this large (to 35m, girth to >6m) long lived (to 700 years) tree is famous for its edible shiny brown fruits enjoyed roasted as a winter treat. It now behaves as a native, spreading by seeding. It has long, large, glossy, *lanceolate* leaves with widely-spaced, spiny teeth and ~20 pairs of prominent parallel veins. After ~25 years, insect-pollinated flowers produce soft-spined fruit cases with 2-3 red-brown nuts. Smooth grey purple bark becomes brown with age and develops vertical fissures which eventually spiral - usually clockwise around the trunk.



**22. Common Walnut** *Juglans regia*

Non-native (grown by the Romans for its nuts) fine, tall (to 35m) tree, usually with a short trunk and wide crown, widely planted in towns, gardens and parks. Easily recognised in summer/autumn when large, round, green fruits appear, housing the familiar large, brown nut, which only ripens after a long hot summer. Its late-appearing shiny, leathery, *pinnate* leaves are divided into 5-9 paired oval, untoothed leaflets + a large one at the end, and smell like polish when crushed. It bears long yellow-green male *catkins* in late spring. Its smooth bark is very pale grey when young, but develops fissures and turns silvery-grey with age. Its timber is good for furniture.



After noting a fine #13 at the corner ahead, return along the avenue for a short distance to the ginnel on the left with a good-sized #23 on the corner and small #24 opposite. Follow the passage up, across Moorfield Rd and on, past a group of three #24 at a parking area, to Ben Rhydding Drive (BRD)

**23. Goat Willow** *Salix caprea* (Pussy Willow and Great Sallow) Widespread in damp woodlands, scrub and hedgerows, it grows to 10m and can live for 300 years. Its shorter, more oval leaf differs from many other willows, has a twisted tip and is hairy grey-green underneath. Male silver fluffy *catkins* (like cat's paws) precede leaves and are yellow when full of pollen in March and April. Female *catkins* are green in April and shed woolly seeds in May. The bark has deep criss-crossed ridges.





#### 24. Common Hazel *Corylus avellana*

Very common in woodland, scrub & hedgerow, reaching 12m and living to 80 yrs - several 100yrs if *coppiced*, typically every 5-10 years, to use for fencing and poles. Its smooth, greyish brown bark peels with age. The double-toothed, soft, round-oval leaves have sudden pointed tips, hairy undersides & stalks, and turn yellow before dropping. Yellow male *catkins* and tiny red bud-like female wind-pollinated flowers appear in late winter before new leaves. The edible fruit, a nut in a short leafy husk, is often eaten before ripe by squirrels. **Note:** English elm has similar leaves but they are rough, hairy and have an asymmetric base



Turn left up BRD, and focusing on the left hand side, pass a #25, another #22, a well-pruned #27 & #1, continuing on up to the large house *Hillfoot*, which has a #9 to the left of the gate and a #26 as the 1st of a group of large conifers in the garden to the right of the driveway

#### 25. Downy Birch *Betula Pubescens* (White or Hairy Birch)

Native to the north, this slender, medium-sized (typically to 20m) tree, has a light open *canopy*, grows further north than any other broadleaf and is a valuable host for a wide range of wildlife. Compared with the similar Silver Birch (with which it easily hybridises) its branches are more upright (never pendulous), its grey-white bark is less papery and browner with horizontal grooves, twigs and leaf stalks are softly hairy. The triangular leaves are more finely serrated and more rounded at the base. Male and female *catkins* appear from April- May on the same tree (monoecious); the long, yellow-brown male *catkins* hang in groups 2-4 at shoot tips like lambs' tails, while bright green wind-pollinated female catkins are smaller, short & erect.



#### 26. Atlas Cedar *Cedrus atlantica* (*Cedrus libani* ssp. *atlantica*) (Atlantic Cedar)

Native to the Atlas Mountains of N Africa, this tall (to 35m) coniferous evergreen member of the pine family with horizontally-spreading branches is conical when young but broadens with age. Grey bark has cracks which form neat plates. Downy young shoots have narrow, dull- to grey-green short needles with small translucent tips, arranged spirally (they are in whorls on short spur-like side shoots). Barrel-shaped, erect cones with a dimpled tip ripen to brown and mature over 2 years, breaking up to release seeds whilst still on the tree.



Cross over BRD and head up Low Wood Rise (LWR) past a fine #23 on the left, then a #27. Opposite is a 23m tall #28 on the right with a pair of colourful #29 on the other side of the driveway

#### 27. Silver Birch *Betula pendula* (Warty Birch)

This striking tree (to 30m) with a light *canopy* & elegant, drooping branches (to 30m) is closely related to alders and shares many features. Native to the south, it is widespread in Britain, growing naturally on moor/heathland and extensively planted in urban areas as an ornamental. Its diagnostic very white young bark sheds thin layers and with age develops characteristic rough large black diamond-shaped fissures. In older trees, it becomes ridged & cracked into dark, rugged plates at the base. Smooth purple-brown twigs have small white warts. Triangular, straight-sided, double-toothed, hairless leaves on hairless stalks have points bending towards leaf tips.



### 28. Black Poplar Hybrid *Populus nigra* 'Italica'

Non-native, fruitless *cultivar* of Black Poplar introduced from Northern Italy in the C18. It has been planted throughout the world as a popular ornamental tree for parks & large gardens. It is a distinctive, elegant, medium-large, *deciduous* tree growing to over 30m. A male clone, it has red *catkins* in early spring, diamond-shaped, hairless leaves & almost vertical branches giving it a characteristic columnar shape. Its dark brown bark is thick with many fissures & burrs. Its vigorous, shallow roots are invasive and can cause damage to nearby structures. At 40-50 years it starts losing branches and can be blown over in high winds.



### 29. Myrobalan Plum *Prunus cerasifera* 'Nigra' (Black Cherry Plum)

Non-native, naturalised, medium-sized (to 12m) tree with upswept branches and a rounded *crown*. This ornamental short-lived (to 20 years) *cultivar* is popular for its very early flowering and dark foliage. Showy, single, deep-pink flowers open from deep pink buds in early spring before ovate-obovate, serrated, blackish-purple leaves which mature to dark green. Its dark grey bark develops fissures with age.



Head back down LWR past #30 on the corner, turn left and continue down BRD, past a #15 on the left, then a tall #31

### 30. Tamarisk *Tamarix gallica*

From N France to N Africa but long naturalised, this hardy, fast-growing, spreading or arching shrub or small tree (to 8m) occasionally seen inland, is salt-tolerant and so is popular in coastal gardens. It has arching, purple-brown stems bearing feathery, pointed, scale-like, grey-green leaves and masses of dense, cylindrical racemes of pink flowers spraying from young shoots in summer.



### 31. Scot's Pine *Pinus silvestris*

Native pine of Scotland, provides a vital home for several rare creatures, and widely planted elsewhere. One of only 3 native conifers with Yew & Juniper. A tall (to 35m) straight evergreen with distinctive orange-brown scaly bark - especially higher up the long bare trunk - Black Pine bark is much darker - can reach 700 years old. Its blue-green, often twisted, needles are in pairs and up to 7cm long (much shorter than Black Pine). Cones are small, tough & green, maturing to grey-brown, and have a raised circular bump at the centre of each scale. Its timber is used for furniture, fences, telegraph poles & wood pulp.



Turn left and walk up to the corner of Brighton Rd to see #32, then return to BRD and continue down, past a #39 on the left, to the Methodist Church at the start of the drive where you will find #33 and beyond this a magnificent #14.2

### 32. Golden Weeping Willow *Salix x sepulcralis* 'Chrysocoma'

This cultivar, made in Germany in 1888, is the most popular of the numerous weeping willows and widely planted in parks and gardens as a fast-growing but short-lived (40-75 years) ornamental tree for its fine colour and characteristic long pendulous branches; to 24m. Its habit comes from Chinese Weeping Willow and twig-colour from Golden Willow. A broad head of twisted, arched branches carries long dangling shoots which start green then with age become (when sunlit) greyish-gold. Young yellow-green lanceolate leaves mature to glossy green. Its pale grey bark is rough and deeply ridged.



### 33. Purple Crab *Malus x purpurea* 'Lemoinei'

Non-native hybrid variant. A vigorous, upright spreading common street & garden ornamental (to 6m). Very untidy, often losing most of its leaves by late summer. Its purplish-grey bark has shallow scales and cracks. Decorative, pointy ovoid, serrated dark green leaves emerge purple and turn yellow in autumn. Abundant spectacular, large red-purple flowers appear in mid-late spring, followed in autumn by dense clusters of small, long-stalked, very dark red fruits.



Pass through the old stone gate posts at the start of BRD and head right around the corner to the seat, behind which is a #34 with, to the left a #35 - all overlooked by a row of tall #18

### 34. Judas Tree *Cercis siliquastrum* (Redbud, Love Tree)

Non-native (from E Mediterranean & W Asia) beautiful small, slow-growing (to 12m) - a relatively compact, ornamental tree ideal for small gardens with many cultivars available. Often multi-stemmed, it keeps an architectural shape even with bare winter branches. Its name comes from a myth that Judas Iscariot hanged himself from such a tree causing its white flowers to turn red. In late spring, bare branches are smothered in pea-like, edible, magenta flowers, popular with bees. Pretty, hairless, untoothed grey-green cordate leaves follow which turn butter yellow before autumn fall. Its grey bark stays smooth for long and develops shallow vertical fissures when mature. Purple-pink flowers appear in compact clusters on old twigs, branches & trunk. These produce flat, long, brown/purple pods in summer which persist thro winter. Its hard timber has an attractive grain, polishes well & is used in veneers.



### 35. Damson *Prunus domestica* subsp. *insititia*

Non-native, plum subspecies with unclear origin found in mixed woodland, hedgerows, parks, gardens & along pavements. It is a small tree or shrub (to 5m) with a 25-year lifespan. Its lovely spring blossom is loved by insect pollinators, and it produces delicious fruit - so it is a popular orchard tree. The dark brown bark is often covered in scars, moss & lichen. Leaves are dark green, shiny, oval & serrated. Small, white clustered flowers produce dark blue-black fruit with a thin white bloom, tasting like a sour plum.



Now, head south up Wheatley Lane, passing a small #36 on the corner of the church grounds and a larger one just beyond. In the hedge just before Brighton Rd is a #3 and further up just after the pub is a #29. Noting tall #16 & #18 on the corner of Wheatley Gardens, on the opposite corner is a lovely #37, and in the garden to the left a couple of colourful #38

**36. Common Yew** *Taxus baccata* (English Yew)

This medium-sized (to 20m), slow-growing, evergreen is commonly found in churchyards, parks & gardens where it is often used for ornamental hedging & topiary. Its association with Christianity (and older beliefs) and ability to reach extreme old age (up to 600 years) have surrounded it by many myths as a symbol of death & doom. Easily recognisable with dense glossy green rows of needles and bright red, fleshy, single-seeded, cup-shaped arils much loved by birds which disperse the seed in droppings. Its peeling bark is reddish-brown with purple tones. All parts of the tree, except for the aril, are poisonous - including through touch & inhalation.



**37. Young's Weeping Birch** *Betula pendula* 'Youngii'

A garden favourite, this decorative, tough, tolerant small tree (to 10m) or bush originating in the 1870s is a more weeping variety of Silver Birch. It has a compact dome-shaped form & long graceful branches that may sweep the ground - a stunning tree for limited garden space. It bears yellow-brown catkins & bright lime green (when young) diamond shaped, *serrated* leaves which darken as they mature & turn golden yellow in autumn. Striking, smooth, white, pink or peeling brown bark, which becomes rough & rugged with age, gives it a beautiful skeletal form in the winter when fully exposed after leaf fall.



**38. Smooth Japanese Maple** *Acer palmatum* (Palmate Maple) This popular, slow-growing tree (15m) with its graceful form and beautiful foliage first reached UK in 1821. It has 1,000s of named *cultivars* selected and grown for the large variety of attractive forms, leaf shapes, and spectacular colours. It is also used as a rootstock for many other Palmata-type maples.



Cross Wheatley Lane to admire the fine #39, continue down to a tall #40 on the corner then to a #41 by the cottage with its name. Passing a #27, cross Wheatley Close and head down to Wheatley Ave. Turn left to find a #42 (one of several along here) then a #27. Cross over to a #43 opposite and a #44 near the corner

**39. Wild Cherry** *Prunus avium* (Sweet Cherry)

One of the prettiest trees, with beautiful early spring blossom & bountiful bright red edible midsummer fruits. Loved by all, including wildlife, it grows up to 30m and lives up to 60 years. Found scattered in old woods, 100s of *cultivars* have also been widely planted in new woods, parks, gardens & streets. Its shiny deep reddish-brown bark has prominent cream-coloured *lenticels* and develops vertical cracks with age. Birds play a key role in its propagation by eating the cherries & dispersing the seeds. Its large, oval, bluntly-serrated leaves with pointed tips and two red glands on the stalk at the leaf base, fade from green to orange & deep crimson in autumn.



#### 40. Common Holly *Ilex aquifolium*

Very common, festive, shrub/small tree with familiar prickly leaves & red berries which may remain throughout winter (to 15m). A popular garden/decorative tree with many cultivated and variegated varieties. Smooth, grey-brown bark is thin and has many small 'warts'. Leathery, dark evergreen, oval leaves are shiny above, matt below and usually prickly (lower branches and younger trees) which deters browsing animals, but may be smooth (upper branches and taller trees,). It bears white insect-pollinated flowers from early spring to early summer developing (female trees only) into toxic scarlet berries - provided a male is nearby - the number depending on how many pollinating insects were active during flowering.



Holly heterophylly (variation of leaf forms in a single tree)

#### 41. Common Laburnum *Laburnum anagyroides* (Golden Chain Tree)

Non-native (introduced from Central Europe in 1560), small (to 7m), spreading, short-lived tree widely planted in parks and gardens as an ornamental due to its profusion of pendulous, golden yellow, pea-like flowers ('golden rain'). All parts of the tree are toxic. Its smooth, dark brown-grey bark develops shallow fissures with age. Flowers are followed by green, hairy pea-like seed pods which ripen brown containing several small, round, black seeds.



#### 42. Small-leaved Lime *Tilia cordata* (Littleleaf Linden)

A large (to >20m) tree of ancient woodland, it is widely planted as an ornamental on streets, and in parks, large gardens and churchyards. It forms tall, irregular domes and older trees have downward-arching branches with *burrs* and suckers on the lower trunk - as in the Common Lime. The smooth, grey bark of young trees becomes darker and cracked into flaky plates with age. Its sweet-smelling summer flowers attract many insects (especially bees) seeking nectar and produce large single-winged, *samaras*. It has heart-shaped, pointed tip leaves, dark shiny green above and paler below which support several moth caterpillars. Distinguished from other limes by its generally smaller, sturdier leaves with tufts of tiny, rusty-orange hairs in underside vein joints and fruits which stand above their stems - in all other limes they hang down.



#### 43. Himalayan Birch *Betula utilis* var *jacquemontii*

From W Himalayas c.1849, this highly ornamental tree with an open habit and pyramidal shape is widely planted in parks, streets & gardens (to 22m). This variety has almost shimmering white bark, which peels yearly to reveal a fresh layer beneath and is horizontally marked with many small lenticels. Ovate, dark-green, rather glossy, serrated leaves on hairy stalks and with 7-8 pairs of veins, turn gold in autumn before falling . . .



Left: Himalayan Birch  
Right: Silver Birch

In early spring it produces long yellow-brown male *catkins*. Known for attracting bees and birds, it has nectar/pollen rich flowers and provides shelter and habitat. Variants are often grafted onto a Silver Birch base.

#### 44. Tibetan Cherry *Prunus serrula* (Birch Bark Tree)

Introduced from W China in 1908, this occasional, vigorous, round-headed, often multi-stemmed garden and street ornamental is grown for its striking shiny, satin-smooth, coppery-red bark between rough brown *lenticel* bands. Its narrow, sage-green, *serrated* leaves are hairy under the veins and turn yellow in autumn. Clusters of dainty white flowers appear around mid-April which produce oval red cherries. The outer bark is almost as tough as Mylar!



Cross back over Wheatley Ave (WA) and continue up past another #43 on the corner and on to the impressive 18m high #13 Copper beech with a girth of 3.4m and 5.7m of visible roots.

Cross over and return along the other side of WA past another #41 on the corner, then turn left to admire the 17m high #44 with a #15 to the right of this, then finally a mature #4

#### 45. Deodar *Cedrus deodara* (Himalayan Cedar)

Non-native, elegant, very large (to 75m) initially conical, then broad-crowned conifer introduced from the Himalaya in 1831 and widely planted as an ornamental in parks, gardens & churchyards. Its branch tips, especially younger ones, typically droop. It bears long, rather soft needles in radiating clusters and barrel-shaped cones which sit distinctively on top of branches and break up to release seeds while still on the tree.



**Glossary:** **Broadleaf:** any tree with flat leaves producing seeds inside fruits - includes most deciduous trees.

**Burr:** deformed growth in response to stress, eg. rounded lump on a trunk. **Canopy:** the extent of the outer layer of leaves.

**Catkins:** cluster of unisexual flowers with no petals. **Coppicing:** cutting near ground level to promote new shoots. **Cordate:** heart-shaped. **Corymb:** flower cluster with proportionally longer lower stalks forming a flat or slightly convex head.

**Crown:** the part of a tree above the first side branches. **Cultivar:** cultivated variety made from an individual plant to keep required traits. **Deciduous:** leaves shed seasonally.

**Double-toothed:** serrated leaf which has smaller serration/s on each larger one. **Fastigate:** branches mainly parallel to the main stem. **Lanceolate:** wider at base than midpoint, tapering toward apex, length-to-width ratio is 3:1 or more. **Lenticel:** small pore allowing oxygen through the bark. **Lobes:** distinct veined projections from leaf midrib. Gaps between do not reach the middle vein, eg. oak. **Native:** indigenous to a particular region; not introduced by humans since the last ice age. **Obovate:** egg-shaped with the narrower end at the base. **Ovate:** egg-shaped. **Palmate:** palm-shaped, eg. horse chestnut leaf. **Pedicel:** short flower stalk. **Pinnate:** compound leaf with lobes (leaflets) arranged either side of a central stem like a feather, eg. ash. **Pollarding:** removal of upper branches to restrict growth - promotes dense head of branches & foliage. **Raceme:** cluster of flowers attached by short stalks to a central stem. **Samara:** dry fruit with flattened wings for wind dispersal. **Serrated:** leaf margin with continuous saw-like teeth pointing forward. **Sucker:** shoot produced the base or root of a tree in response to stress or injury. **Umbel:** flower with short stalks (pedicels) spreading from a point

#### Sources of Info on Tree ID

**Online:** 1) wiki2.org 2) treeguideuk.co.uk 3) woodlandtrust.org.uk 4) keele.ac.uk/arboretum/outtrees 5) wildlifetrusts.org/wildlife-explorer/trees-and-shrubs/

**Print:** *Collins Complete Guide to British Trees* - Paul Sterry 2008 (360 species, sub-species, etc) | *The Complete Book of Trees of Britain & Europe* - Tony Russell 2011 (550) | *Trees of Britain and Ireland* - Edward Milner 2011 | *Collins British Tree Guide* - Owen Johnson & David More 2015 (400) | *The Little Book Of Trees: A Visual Guide for all the Family* - Caz Buckingham & Andrea Pinnington 2019 (40)

## Getting Involved with Trees

If, after doing this guided walk, you wish to further develop your interest in trees and maybe even get more involved, there are a number of ways you can do this, mainly through the Woodland Trust including . . .

**1. Volunteering** <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/support-us/act/volunteer-with-us/>: whatever your skills or background and however much time you can give, you can become a volunteer, crucial to their work in protecting and caring for UK's woods and trees. Volunteers carry out a huge variety of roles to help plant and protect woods and trees, eg. spotting threatened woods that need help, spreading the word about the value of woods and trees, carrying out practical tasks on site. If not ready or able to commit to a regular role, you could do . . .

**2. Microvolunteering** <https://whittle.woodlandtrust.org.uk/microvolunteering/> which 'allows busy people to take part in a huge range of opportunities with no ongoing commitment - from woodland clean ups to a home-based short-term role and everything in between'.

**3. Adding to the Ancient Tree Inventory** <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/visiting-woods/things-to-do/ancient-tree-inventory/>: you can help to protect old or ancient trees by discovering them in your area, getting some basic info on the tree (eg. girth, species, location) and adding it to a map. The ATI has records of over 180,000 trees but there are many more out there.

**4. Contributing to Natures Calendar** <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/visiting-woods/things-to-do/natures-calendar/>: by choosing a (tree) species at a given location and recording its condition and behaviour throughout the year, eg. date of flowering. This can help in monitoring the effects of weather and climate change on wildlife.

**5. Becoming a Tree Warden** <https://treecouncil.org.uk/tree-wardens/>: to plant, protect and promote local trees.

**6. Protecting a Specific Tree** <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/protecting-trees-and-woods/campaign-with-us/campaign-in-your-community/tree-preservation-orders/>: if you feel a particular tree is a local amenity and/or is under threat from deliberate damage or destruction, you can contact the Tree Officer of your local council to ask for a Tree Protection Order to be placed on the tree.

## Useful Tree Info Resources

**1. Local Tree Maps** <https://ilkleytrees.org.uk/maps/>: here are links inter alia for Ilkley Tree Areas, Tree Preservation Orders, and Woodland Trust Ancient, Veteran and Notable Trees.

**2. State of the UK's Woods and Trees 2021** <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/media/51705/state-of-the-uks-woods-and-trees-2021-thewoodlandtrust.pdf>: this report, the first of its kind, presents important facts and trends focusing mainly on native woods and trees, and trees in towns and cities.

**3. Ilkley Trees** [ilkleytrees.org.uk](http://ilkleytrees.org.uk): includes info on local initiatives, maps (see above), recording lost and champion trees, tree trails (like this one) and links to other useful resources.

This booklet was produced by Chris Forshaw between August 2022-May 2023. I hope you enjoyed the trail and learning about the trees. Please send any comments to [trees@ilkleytrees.org.uk](mailto:trees@ilkleytrees.org.uk). Thanks are due to Wharfedale Naturalists Society (WNS) for covering the print costs, Sue & Neil Stevens (producers of the Ilkley Tree Trails booklets) for advice and encouragement and Bruce Brown, WNS Botany Recorder, for help with tree identification. This trail and the existing four Ilkley Tree Trails (Introduction to Trees, Town Centre Trees, Trees in Winter, Darwin Gardens and the Moor) can be downloaded from [ilkleytrees.org.uk/treetrails](http://ilkleytrees.org.uk/treetrails). Free print copies should be available in Ilkley from the Grove Book Shop, the Visitors Centre and the Clark Foley Centre.

# Tree Locations



- |                        |                       |                         |                           |                       |
|------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Common Lime         | 11. Bastard Service   | 21. Sweet Chestnut      | 31. Scot's Pine           | 41. Common Laburnum   |
| 2. Common Whitebeam    | 12. Blue Spruce       | 22. Common Walnut       | 32. Golden Weeping Willow | 42. Small-Leaved Lime |
| 3. Corkscrew Hazel     | 13. Copper Beech      | 23. Goat Willow         | 33. Purple Crab           | 43. Himalayan Birch   |
| 4. English Oak         | 14. Common Beech      | 24. Common Hazel        | 34. Judas Tree            | 44. Tibetan Cherry    |
| 5. Field Maple         | 15. Lawson Cypress    | 25. Downy Birch         | 35. Damson                | 45. Deodar            |
| 6. Siberian Elm        | 16. Common Ash        | 26. Atlas Cedar         | 36. Common Yew            |                       |
| 7. Common Pear         | 17. Horse Chestnut    | 27. Silver Birch        | 37. Young's Weeping Birch |                       |
| 8. Norway Maple        | 18. Sycamore          | 28. Black Hybrid Poplar | 38. Smooth Japanese Maple |                       |
| 9. Purple Norway Maple | 19. Swedish Whitebeam | 29. Myrobalan Plum      | 39. Wild Cherry           |                       |
| 10. False Acacia       | 20. Orchard Apple     | 30. Tamarisk            | 40. Common Holly          |                       |

This map can be downloaded from [ilkleytrees.org.uk](http://ilkleytrees.org.uk)