

The Oxton Society Tree Planting Fund a selection of suitable trees



February 2020

Trees eligible for planting by the Tree Planting Fund are those that will attain a mature stature sufficient to contribute to the Conservation Area's future treescape. For this reason the trees listed are those that will be medium to large.

Some trees may not be available and some may not be unsuitable in particular locations. Advice is available from the Society.

AGM = Royal Horticultural Society's Award of Garden Merit. This is not a recommendation but confirmation that the RHS considers it to be of outstanding excellence for garden use. An AGM award is not a guarantee that the plant will be suitable in all situations but we consider the ones included below are suitable for Oxton.

Pictures: The RHS website is an excellent source of information www.rhs.org.uk. However, the photos of trees shown in the Plant Selector section of its website are often limited to details such as leaves. To get pictures of whole trees do a Google "images" search of the Latin names. Take care – this search can often display images that are incorrectly labeled. It is always best to rely on images that are found on the websites of reputable and established UK companies and especially specialist nurseries.

Red = special features

Blue = trees already planted in the Oxton Conservation Area under the Society's Tree Planting Fund scheme. All are visible from a public place. For their planted locations contact Steve Ferguson 652 6089 or info@theoxtonsociety.co.uk

Alders [*Alnus*]

A. cordata (Italian alder) AGM

This is a **handsome and stately** tree said to be the finest of the Alders. Egg shaped crown with an ultimate height in best conditions about 25m. The crown width at the base is limited (about one third its height). Fast growing (16m in 20 years). Its heart-shaped shiny leaves (when young they are said to be good in salads!) are carried late into the year. It carries, in March, male and female attractive yellow catkins (both on the same tree) which are pollinated by the wind. Small cones are carried in autumn and are feasted on by seed-eating migrant birds – edible for humans too!

Ash [*Fraxinus*]

The arrival in the UK of 'ash dieback' (*Chalara fraxinea*) makes us unable to support the planting of these trees.

Beech [*Fagus*]

F. sylvatica (common beech)

A very fine tree found widely in Oxton but needing a large space. The **copper beech - variety 'Purpurea'** - is often planted but its colour can be found to be quite dominating and would not be normally recommended. However, if the *Purpurea* variety is being independently chosen it should be a grafted specimen from a good-coloured variety to avoid what has been called a murky shade of muddy purple.

F. sylvatica 'Dawyck' (Dawyck Beech) AGM

This can be a more suitable variety for smaller gardens as it is **tall and slender** (referred to as "fastigate"). It has an ultimate height about 30m.

Birch [*Betula*]

These are fast growing and provide a light canopy **without dense shade**. Birches have especially shallow roots which make them unsuitable for planting as freestanding trees in a lawn.

B. utilis

The **whitest stemmed** of the birches is the variety called *Jacquemontii*. Because of the trunk colour it has all **year-round interest**. It is often (incorrectly) labeled as "B. jacquemontii". It is relatively fast growing reaching 14m in 20 years and an ultimate height of 20m.

B. pendula (Silver birch) AGM

A **native** tree, medium-sized with slender drooping twigs. Bark is white flecked with black (not as pure white as *Jacquemontii*), becoming black and rugged at base.

Chestnut [*Aesculus*]

Horse chestnut

This is chestnut used for 'conkers' with fine spring flowers. Unfortunately horse chestnuts cannot now be recommended for planting through the Society's Tree Planting Fund. Both the white flowered (*A. hippocastaneum*) and the red *A. x carnea* are now vulnerable to 'bleeding canker', a bacteria infection (*Pseudomonas syringae*) or a fungus (*Phytophthora*) both of which can - but not always - prove fatal.

Incidentally, the Sweet/Spanish Chestnut [*Castanea*], is the edible chestnut. It is not related to the Horse Chestnut and is not affected by its infections. It is very large, up to 35m, and apart from edible nuts, it has few features to merit such a large tree being included within the Tree Planting Fund recommendations.

Hazel [*Corylus*]

The *Corylus* group are deciduous trees and large shrubs with broad leaves, and showy male catkins in early spring, followed by edible nuts.

C. colurna AGM (Turkish hazel)

This is a large tree, mature height 25m, rather columnar when young before broadening to a symmetrical pyramid on maturity. Notable for its roughly textured, corky bark, it produces long, **yellow catkins** in early spring and clusters of fringed **nuts** in autumn. It can be prone to aphids (see the general note in 'Lime' section below).

Hornbeam [*Carpinus*]

C. betulus

A fast growing [11m in 20 years] native Hornbeam. Its autumn colours are **yellow, orange and russet**. It is very shade tolerant. It grows to 30m

C. betulus "fastigata" AGM

A smaller variety than *C. betulus* with an ultimate height of 20m is often preferred as it has upright branches which gives it an oval-shaped crown and limited spread and a **yellow autumn** colour. In the winter it has a **statuesque striking appearance** with its dense upward-growing branches.

Lime or Linden [*Tilia*]

Limes have a bad reputation for urban planting because of some unpleasant characteristics of the common lime *Tilia x europaea*. That tree, often found in Oxton, is long lived and stately but is infested by aphid/greenfly which drop masses of sticky honeydew which becomes an excellent nutrient for a black mould that covers its foliage and anything underneath. It also has vigorous and untidy sprouts from around the base of its trunk. We have consulted the RHS and find that there are much better species which overcome these problems. **The species below are said not to be infected by aphids nor do they have sprouting shoots at the base.**

T. x euchlora (Caucasian lime) AGM

Glossy green foliage turning bright **yellow** in autumn. It is considered to have a good shape for urban planting. Ultimate height of about 20m and a crown width of about 10m.

T. oliveri (Oliver's Lime)

Green leaves have a **silvery-white underside** which makes the tree attractive when being moved by a breeze. Mid-summer clusters of **scented white flowers**. A rounded crown, 20m high, 8m wide.

Maidenhair tree [*Ginkgo biloba* "Autumn Gold"] AGM

A tall and narrow tree with triangular leaves (with two lobes, hence its Latin name bi-loba) that does not form a dense canopy. Spectacular **golden yellow leaf colour** in autumn. Mature height is said to be about 15m.

The fruit of the mature female Ginkgo is said to have an unpleasant odor and for this reason male trees are preferred. The variety "Autumn Gold" is reliably male!

PS: The *Ginkgo* was the dominant tree on earth 200 million years ago and has been well recorded in fossil evidence before the evolution of conifers. Only this one species has survived into modern times. It was 'discovered' by European plant hunters in the 18th Century within protected temple gardens in China.

Maples [*Acer*]

A very large group of trees and shrubs often known for their autumn colour although this does not apply to all trees.

A. campestre "Elsrijk" (Field Maple) AGM

The field maple is a **native** tree but this variety is considered a better form of it. It has a more regular, oval habit. A medium to large sized tree particularly recommend for urban and street plantings. **Bright yellow** autumn colour. Quite slow growing (8m at 20 years). Mature height about 15m.

A. platanoides "Crimson King" (Norway maple) AGM

This is a large tree with a round dense crown. The leaves are **deep ruby-red throughout the year** and can give it a "dark" appearance which can be quite dominating. This is a large tree attaining an ultimate height of 28m and reaches 13m in 20 years.

A. rubrum 'October Glory' AGM

This is a large (mature height 23m) deciduous tree with erect main branches. Leaves 3-lobed, dark green above, whitish beneath, **crimson red in autumn**. Flowers crimson on bare branches. However, one large supplier (BarchamTrees plc) reports that it is dependent on the trace element manganese which it can only access (in acid conditions). However, one (planted in 2011/12) is growing well in Oxton.

Oaks [*Quercus*]

Oaks can no longer be recommended for planting by the Society's Tree Planting Fund as there is concern about the long-term survival of all oaks in the UK. A bacterial disease, which is spreading rapidly through the country, from the south reached the NW in the early 2010s.

Pear [*Pyrus*]

Fruit trees are not normally included in the list of trees suitable for support from the Society's Tree Planting Fund as they do not usually have the stature of a tree which will contribute to the treescape. However, the species below is an exception – but note that it does *not* have edible fruit.

P. calleryana "Chanticleer" AGM

'Chanticleer' is a narrowly conical medium-sized (about 12m high) deciduous tree with glossy dark leaves. It has abundant clusters of **white flowers** followed by small inedible brown fruits. It is said to colour **red in autumn**.

Plane [*Platanus*]

Platanus x hispanica (synonymous with *x acerifolia*) AGM

This is the "London Plane" is a large stately tree, often planted as a street tree, with large maple-like leaves and a **mottled bark**. It will reach 15m in 20 years.

Pride of India [*Koelreuteria paniculata*]

This tree is sometimes called "Golden Rain Tree" is actually native to China and Korea. A medium tall tree with a wide crown (h. 10m x w. 8m) making it suitable for a large space. It reaches its final height in 20-50 years. Its foliage is accompanied in the **summer** by sprays of bright yellow flowers. The flowers are followed by inflated bladder-like fruits. It has dark red bark in **winter** with pinkish-red foliage in **spring**. In **autumn**, the leaves turn bright yellow and fall early.

K. paniculata 'Coral Sun' AGM

With its AGM status this is the preferred variety but may be difficult to source at a cost within the range of the Tree Planting Fund. Please enquire.

Rowans and Whitebeams [*Sorbus*]

This is a group with a very wide range of sizes and characteristics. Most are too small to be eligible for funding from the Tree Planting Fund. One can be recommended:

S. aria "Majestica" AGM

A whitebeam growing 10m in 20 years. Its crown is roundish. It has breaking buds resembling Magnolia blossom and **berries** and **silver-whitish** undersides of the leaves in spring. At spring time the two sides of the leaves are exposed by a breeze. Best planted where it is not in competition from other adjacent trees whose shade will affect its growth.

Sweet gum [*Liquidambar*]

A group of trees native to southeast N. America whose leaves are a bit similar to maple leaves. They are usually sold here for their **autumn colours** - but this is variable and it is important to select a particular variety known for its colouring. Its crown is not as dense as a maple (see this list) and its largely columnar form makes it good for garden planting. They need deep soil.

L. styraciflua "Warplesdon" AGM

This variety has reliable **autumn foliage** - maroon with tinges of yellow and crimson. It has a mature height of 28m. It is quite fast growing as one, planted in Oxton, reached 12m in 20 years.

Tulip Tree [*Liriodendron*]

L. tulipifera

A very big (30m) vigorous tree with a spreading upright crown. Butter yellow foliage in the autumn and established specimens it develops a smoky-purple hue. After 25 years it can bear tulip-like flowers in early summer. As a lime-free soil needed local conditions would need to be checked before planting.

***L. tulipifera* 'Aureomarginatum' AGM**

As above but with leaves that have rich golden-yellow margins throughout the year.