

Sydney Gardens Bath Tree Trail

Sydney Gardens Tree Trail

The Sydney Gardens Tree Trail celebrates some of the outstanding trees in this historic Georgian Pleasure Garden that opened in 1795.

This Tree Trail was developed by the Friends of Sydney Gardens and written by Gill Gazzard from personal research with additional data from an Arboreal Assessment by Bosky Trees for the Sydney Gardens Project in 2020, B&NES Tree Team, and by Richard S White.



Cone from the
Giant Sequoia

The 15 trees highlighted were chosen for varying reasons: some for their significance - Britain & Ireland Champion the Yellow Bean Tree and County Champion the Cappadocian Maple, others for their height and their heritage - the Cedar of Lebanon, 29m high and the Giant Sequoia, 28m high. Additionally, others were chosen for their historical significance - the European Beech thought to be one of the oldest trees in the park, and the special First World War memorial tree, the Peace Oak. However, there are many other beautiful trees in this significant Georgian garden.

The tree labels (from Spring 2021) are placed to inform the visitor and to highlight some noteworthy trees in Sydney Gardens. The labelling of the trees was funded by the Friends of Sydney Gardens, with support received from B&NES Parks Service.

For further information about the trees and the park go to:

www.bathnes.gov.uk/sydneygardens
www.friendsofsydneygardens.org

Share your favourite trees with us:

[@fosydneygardens](https://twitter.com/fosydneygardens) and
[@bathnesparks](https://twitter.com/bathnesparks) on Twitter
and Instagram.

Open this leaflet and
make your way around
the park following the
numbered map.

Leaf from the
Ginkgo biloba

Leaf from the
London Plane

The Friends of Sydney Gardens
and the Sydney Gardens project



SYDNEY GARDENS BATH

Forester Road

Beckford Road / A36

To Cleveland Pools ↑

Warminster and Salisbury ↗

A36

Bathwick Street

Walcot and M4 ↖

Main entrance →

Entrance ←

Sydney Road

Entrance ←

Entrance →

The Holburne Museum

Sutton Street

City centre ↖

Widcombe ↓
A36

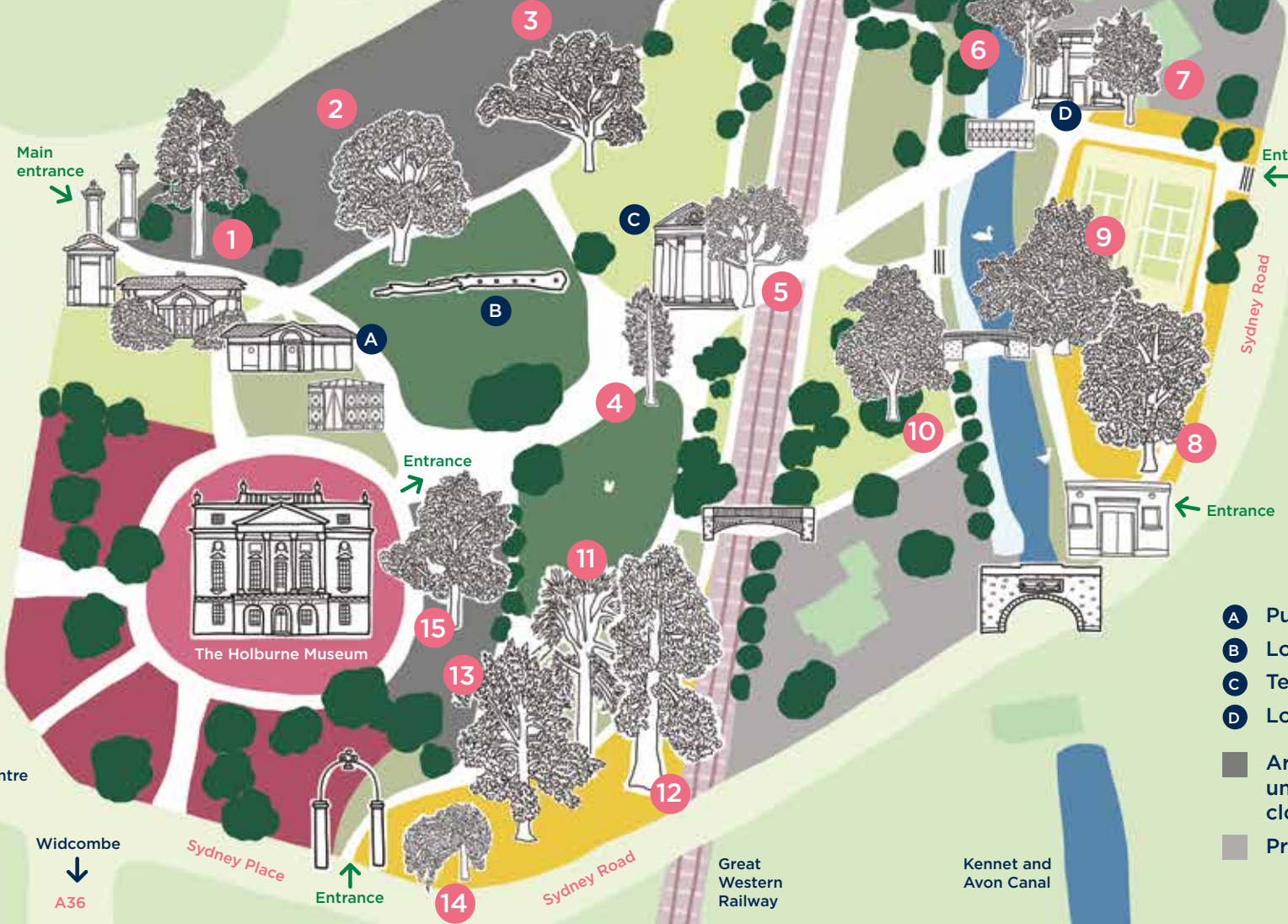
Sydney Place

Entrance ↑

Sydney Road

Great Western Railway

Kennet and Avon Canal



- A** Public toilets
- B** London plane tree trunk
- C** Temple of Minerva
- D** Loggia
- Areas of the park currently under construction and closed to the public
- Private properties



1 Black Pine *Pinus nigra* (also called the European Black Pine or Austrian Black Pine), 19m high, 7m radius. The Black Pine is a Native of southern European coastal areas. It is fast growing; 33-61 cm a year; can reach 20-55m tall and can live upwards of 500 years. The Black Pine is well suited to urban parks due to its toleration of air pollution. The Black Pine is monoecious; male and female tree, in May it produces red female or yellow male flowers. The trees fruit: cones, grow to 5-8cm long and produce winged seeds.

2 Cappadocian Maple *Acer cappadocicum 'Aureum'* County Champion tree. The Maple tree stands 15m high, 9m radius. Originally from the Caucasus, Asia and N India, was introduced into Scotland (Fifeshire) in 1838 and has become naturalised in the UK; established and seeding in the wild since 1977. The leaves are green, palm shaped with 5-7 lobes, are yellow in Spring, then become green before changing to a rich yellow/gold in the autumn. The flowers produced in the spring are yellow/green in colour and grow in small clusters, which are followed by winged seeds in the Autumn.



3 Peace Oak *Quercus robur 'concordia'* 14m high, 9m radius. Known as the Common Oak or the Golden Oak, it is native of Europe and the Caucasus. This cultivar is slow growing, achieves only a modest stature; 6-8 meters and is characterised by its golden hued spring foliage, which remain the same colour throughout the summer. The leaves and flowers appear together in April; male and female flowers are yellowish-green catkins. Acorns develop and mature in the Autumn.

4 Coastal Redwood *Sequoia sempervirens* 19m high, 6m radius. Origin the US; prolific on the west coast. The coastal redwood can take 400 - 500 years to reach maturity; some shown to be 1,500 years old, and often exceed 90m in height. The bark can be up to 30cm thick. The needle like spines on the branches are spirally arranged. The cones are small; 2cm bearing few seeds.



5 Yellow Bean Tree *Catalpa ovata* is a Country Champion; standing 21 m high, 8.5m radius, and is a native of China. Champion tree status means it is the largest of its kind in the UK; recorded on the Tree Register of the British Isles. The leaves of the tree are large heart shaped 20-30cm long and 15-20cm broad. In the spring/summer months the tree produces trumpet shaped cream flowers; from 2-4cm across, in panicles of 20-40 flowers. The flowers then form slender seedpods 25-30cm long; which turn brown, open and fall to the ground the following spring.

6 Tree of Heaven *Ailanthus altissima* stands 21m high, 9m radius. An exotic tree from China; where the given name is 'chouchun; translates as 'foul smelling tree' which it is! In China the tree is planted to host the Ailanthus silkworm moth, for production of Shantung Silk. The tree is also widely used in Chinese medicine for such diverse ailments as mental health and baldness. The Tree of Heaven has male and female trees, the trees are fast growing; 2m/year but only live for 50-70 years. The tree sends out many suckers and uses chemicals to inhibit the growth of surrounding plants.



7 Maidenhair Tree *Ginkgo biloba* stands 14m high, 5.5m radius. Originating in China where some are recorded to be over 1500 years old, arriving in England around 1750s. It is deciduous and grows up to 40m tall. The leaves are fan shaped, up to 12cm across are divided into two lobes, opening as pale green, then turn bright yellow in the autumn. Each tree has either male or female flowers (dioecious): male flowers are yellow, pendulous, measuring up to 8cm, female flowers up to 4cm long.

8 European Beech *Fagus sylvatica* 30m high, 14m radius. This tree is large enough to place it as part of Sydney Gardens original planting scheme and may have been part of a beech hedge surrounding the 'Ride'. The European Beech is the most commonly cultivated beech. Beeches are monoecious; meaning they bear both male and female flowers on the same plant. The flowers are produced in the spring just after the new leaves appear. The flowers are small white and unisexual; male flowers are wind pollinating catkins and the female flowers are produced in pairs. The beechnut is the fruit of the beech which appears in the autumn. The beech nut is roughly triangular, small and edible, having a mild nut-like taste. The nuts have a high fat content and can be pressed to produce edible oil.



9 London Plane *Platanus x hispanica* 28m high, 17m radius, a Hybrid of the American and Oriental Planes. The Plane was brought to the England in 1680; some of the original trees still living have been recorded as growing 20m in 50 years. This London Plane was thought to have been planted in 1777. The Plane tree is well suited for towns and cities because of its resistance to pollution; dirt easily washing off its shiny thick and leathery leaves. The leaves, with five triangular lobes, turn a rich yellow/orange in Autumn before falling. The London Plane is monoecious, a male and female tree. The male and female flowers are ball-shaped; but not found on the same stems. The female flowers: after wind pollination, develop into spikey fruit with stiff hair. Over the winter the fruits slowly break up and release their seeds. The bark is shed in large thin plates in mid-summer.

10 Tulip Tree *Liriodendron tulipifera* 16m high, 5.5m radius is a member of the magnolia family. Native of North America, can grow up to 50m high. This is another tree which ideal for city parks and gardens due to its tolerance of pollution. The tree is fast growing solid wood growth. Leaves have 4 lobes and are 12-15cm wide and long. The flowers produced in May, on mature trees, are perfumed, yellow or green, very rarely white, with orange markings around the base. The flowers stand vertically from the branch; about 4-5cm in length and are followed by upright clusters of single winged seeds similar in appearance to a cone.



11 Blue Atlas Cedar *Cedrus atlantica Glauca* 24m high, 10m radius. Blue Atlas Cedars are native to the Atlas Mountains of Algeria and Morocco. The 'Glauca Group' are one of the most striking in appearance of all the blue conifers. Identified by its short, silvery-blue needles which spiral around the stems and the barrel shaped cones it produces; the cones can take 2 years to mature.



continued on next page...

Tree trail continued...



12 Giant Sequoia *Sequoiadendron giganteum* 28m high, 5m radius. The Giant Sequoia is the only living genus of *Sequoiadendron giganteum*. Sequoia is native of the Pacific coast and North America. Recorded at heights of over 85m; and is thought it can live as long as 3500 years. This Sequoia in Sydney Gardens is thought to be over 160 years old, planted when the railway line was built through the gardens. The Giant Sequoias only reproduce by seeds; which can remain inside the cones for up to 20 years.

13 Cedar of Lebanon *Cedrus libani* 29m high, 9.5m radius. Native of the Eastern Mediterranean where it has great religious and historic significance; it is the national emblem of Lebanon. The *C. libani* is a coniferous evergreen, which can reach 40m in height. The tree bark is rough and scaly with a colour range from grey to blackish brown. The leaves, needle like, are 10-15mm long, the flowers/cones 6-9cm long, which begin to be produced from around the age of 40 years. The *C. libani* grows rapidly until the age of 45-50 years, then growth slows; after the age of 70 years growth is extremely slow.



14 Weeping Ash *Fraxinus excelsior 'Pendula'* 5m height, 5.5m radius. The weeping ash is native throughout Europe. It is a deciduous, umbrella-shaped tree, with branches arching to the ground. The green leaves are attractive in pinnate form; small leaves attached to main centre vein, which turn yellow in autumn. In spring they produce purple flowers from which distinctive winged seeds develop. Sadly, Weeping Ash are extremely susceptible to Ash Die Back so it is likely the tree will succumb.

15 London Plane *Platanus x hispanica* height 14m, radius 9.5m. Although only half the height of the London Plane at the top of Sydney Gardens it is still an impressive tree which is situated in a significant position in the Georgian Pleasure Gardens.



Friends of Sydney Gardens

A community organization dedicated to protecting and conserving Sydney Gardens.

Contact: info@friendsofsydneygardens.org

Find out more about how our trees connect across time and place – read the essay on botany, empire and deep time here:

<https://medium.com/sydney-gardens-bath/trees/home>

**SYDNEY
GARDENS
BATH**

Bath & North East
Somerset Council
Improving People's Lives



COMMUNITY
FUND



HERITAGE
FUND

Some of our special trees

The Peace Oak *Quercus robur 'concordia'* (3) was planted in July 1919 as part of the Peace Day celebrations in Bath to mark the end of the First World War. The cultivar originated in a nursery in the Flanders town of Ghent, Belgium in 1843. Perhaps the Concordia variety was chosen as the Peace Oak due to its connection to Belgium, which became hallowed ground following the Great War. The 100th anniversary of the Peace Oak was celebrated in July 2019 and attended by the granddaughter of the Mayor, Cllr Wills who planted the tree.



Yellow Bean Tree

Catalpa ovata (5) is a Country Champion – the largest specimen of its kind in the UK – standing beside the Temple of Minerva, which was

brought to Sydney Gardens from the Great Exhibition in London around 1911. Originating in China, the wood from this tree has been used for thousands of years as the soundboard for a stringed instrument, the Guqin. Perhaps the Catalpa is in flower, or perhaps you'll see the long bean pods hanging down?



Maidenhair Tree

Ginkgo biloba (6) stands in its own flower bed beside the Loggia. The Ginkgo is the only surviving member of a family of trees which were common in Jurassic times – it's a living fossil – and is not closely related to any other tree. The Ginkgo originated in China, arriving in England around 1750s. It has a distinctive fan shaped leaf which turns brilliant yellow in Autumn. Tokyo has declared the Ginkgo its official tree; note, 6 Ginkgo trees that survived the Hiroshima nuclear bomb blast are still living today.



Giant Sequoia

Sequoiadendron giganteum (12) stands in a significant trio of 'exotics' down by the Railway Line with a Blue Atlas Cedar and a Cedar of Lebanon. The tree carries the generic name of Sequoiadendron after Sequoyah, an educator and significant person in the Cherokee Nation. In the USA the periodic forest fires help the cones to open and allow the seeds to escape and grow in the bare burnt soil. Their characteristic spongy bark gives them some resistance to the fires.

The London Plane Tree Trunk

Platanus x hispanica on the lower lawn sadly had to be felled in 2018 due to fungus. This tree is one of a number of huge Plane trees in the park. Now you can climb on this giant!

