

Sydney Gardens Bath Tree Trail

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The Sydney Gardens Tree Trail celebrates some of the outstanding trees in this historic Georgian Pleasure Garden, which opened 11 May 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 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.

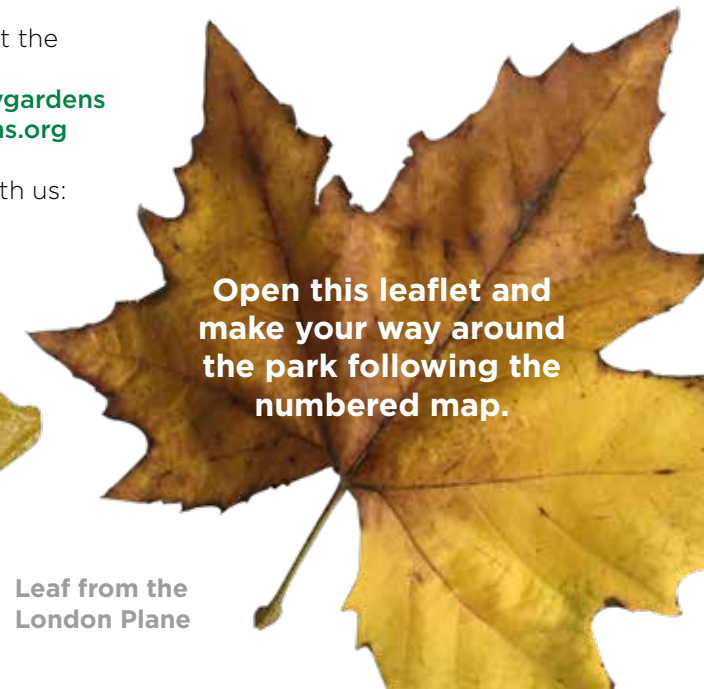
For further information about the trees and the park go to:
www.bathnes.gov.uk/sydneygardens
www.friendsofsydneygardens.org

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



Leaf from the
Ginkgo biloba

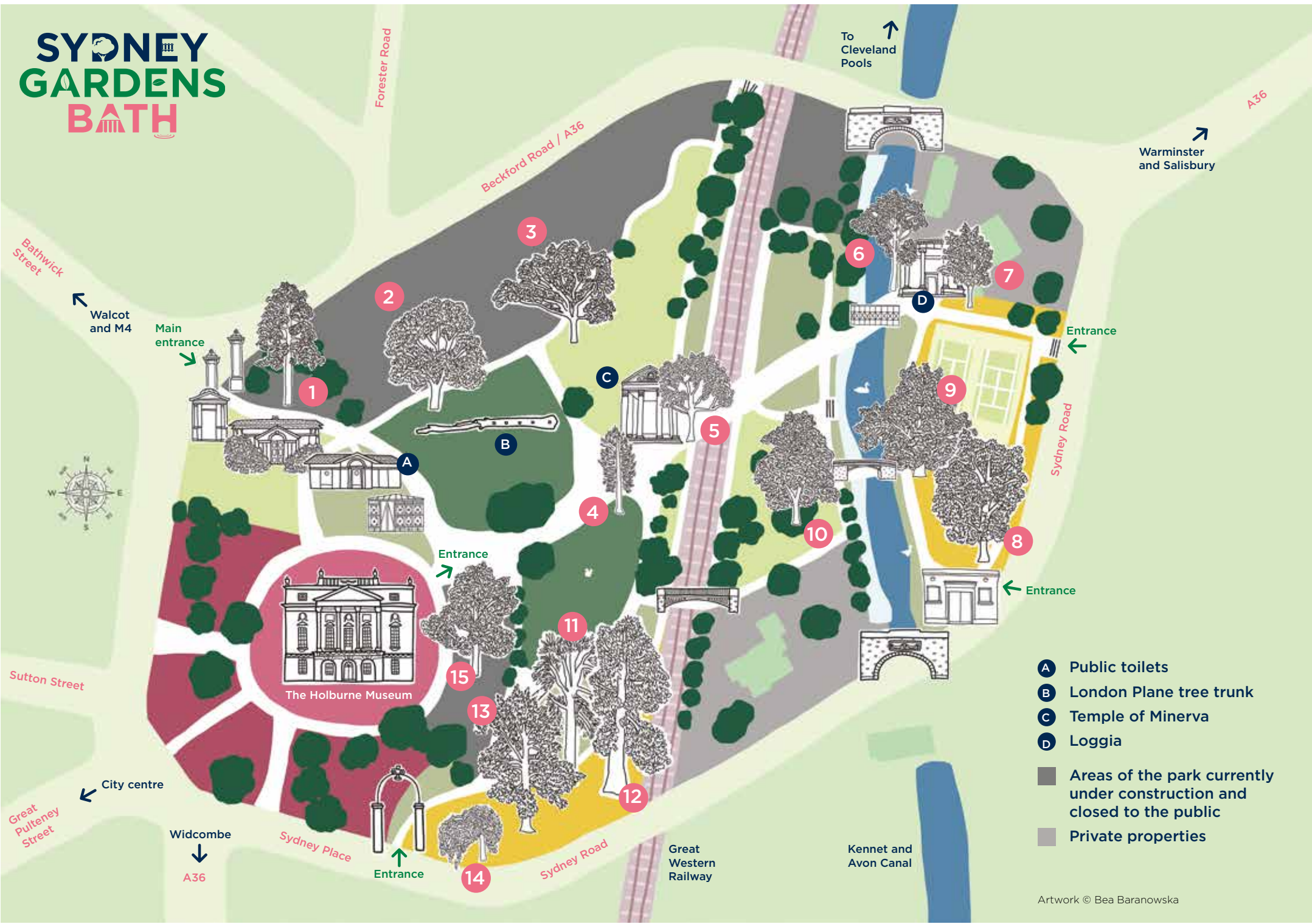


Leaf from the
London Plane

The Friends of Sydney Gardens
and the Sydney Gardens project



SYDNEY GARDENS BATH





1 Black Pine *Pinus nigra* (also called the European Black Pine or Austrian Black Pine), height 19m, girth 2.26m. The Black Pine is a native of southern European coastal areas. It is fast growing, 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: producing both yellow male flowers and red female flowers in May. The winged seeds are encased in 5-8cm long cones.

2 Cappadocian Maple *Acer cappadocicum* 'Aureum' County Champion tree, height 15.5m, girth 2.9m. Originally from the Caucasus, Asia and N India, was introduced into Scotland (Fifeshire) in 1838 and has become naturalised in the south of the UK; established and seeding in the wild since 1977. The leaves, 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' height 14m, girth 2.23m. 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* height 19m, girth 2.95m. 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 leaves are flattened and symmetrically arranged on the branches. The cones are small, 2cm, bearing few seeds.



5 Yellow Bean Tree *Catalpa ovata* is a Country Champion height 21m, girth 2.75m. Champion tree status means it is the tallest of its kind in the UK and Ireland; recorded on the Tree Register of the British Isles. A native of China, this tree has large heart-shaped leaves up to 30cm long and 20cm broad. In July and August the tree produces large panicles of up to 40 trumpet-shaped cream 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* height 21m, girth 2.7m. An exotic tree from China where the given name is 'chouchun', translating 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 per year, but generally 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* height 14m, girth 1.9m. Originating in China where some are recorded to be over 1500 years old, arriving in England around 1750. It is deciduous and grows up to 40m tall. The leaves are fan shaped, up to 12cm across and are divided into two lobes on young shoots. They open 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* height 30m, girth 4.5m. This Beech 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'. Beech trees have distinctive smooth, light grey bark. They are monoecious, bearing both female and male flowers on the same tree. The small flowers appear in the spring just after the new leaves; the leaf bud is very pointed in appearance. The female flowers are produced in pairs and the male flowers are wind pollinating catkins. The fruit of the beech is the beechnut, which develops inside a spikey casing; burr, which falls to the ground in the autumn. The beechnuts, roughly triangular in shape, have a high fat content and can be pressed to produce an edible oil.



9 London Plane *Platanus x hispanica* height 28m, girth 6.6m, a hybrid of the American and Oriental Planes. The Plane, brought to the England in 1680 is fast growing when young; some trees recorded 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, with both male and female flowers; both are ball-shaped; but not found on the same stems. Wind-pollinated, the female flowers, develop into spiky fruit with stiff hairs which are retained over the winter gradually breaking up to release their seeds. The bark is shed in large thin plates in mid-summer.

10 Tulip Tree *Liriodendron tulipifera* height 16m, girth 1.7m, is a member of the magnolia family. A native of North America, can grow up to 50m high. This is another tree which is ideal for city parks and gardens due to its tolerance of pollution. The leaves have four lobes growing up to 12-15cm wide and long. The flowers are produced in May on mature trees; they are tulip-shaped, perfumed, yellow and green 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 Group* height 24m, girth 3.4m. 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, which can take 2 years to mature.



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Tree trail continued...



12 Giant Sequoia *Sequoiadendron giganteum* height 28m, girth 4.98m. The Giant Sequoia is the only living species of *Sequoiadendron giganteum*. Sequoia is native to the Pacific North West of America. Recorded at heights of over 85m, it is thought it can live as long as 3500 years. The Sequoia in Sydney Gardens is thought to be over 160 years old; planted soon after the species was brought to the UK in 1853. The Giant Sequoias only reproduce by seeds; which can remain inside the cones for up to 20 years.

13 Cedar of Lebanon *Cedrus libani* height 29m, girth 3.6m. 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, and 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' height 5m, girth 1.24m. The Ash is native throughout Europe. This weeping form is an umbrella-shaped tree with branches arching to the ground. The green leaves have an attractive pinnate form: small leaflets attached to the main central stem (rachis); they turn yellow before they fall. 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 this tree will succumb.

15 London Plane *Platanus x hispanica* height 14m, girth 5.21m. Although only half the height of the London Plane at the top of Sydney Gardens this 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>



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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.



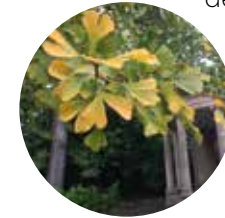
Yellow Bean Tree

Catalpa ovata (5) is a Country Champion - the tallest 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, six 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!

