



The Tiny Forest at Bull Meadow

Varieties
planted
in 2025

Welcome to the Tiny Forest, an area of dense, fast-growing, native woodland, planted by villagers and designed to provide an oasis for plants, insects, birds and small mammals. These hundreds of carefully selected trees grow faster, jump-starting the forest creation process and capturing more carbon. They mature rapidly, creating forest communities similar to natural forests and help provide nature-based remedies for issues such as flooding, air quality and symptoms of climate change. Tiny Forests are based on an established forest management method developed in the 1970s by Dr Akira Miyawaki. Ours is one of several hundred in the UK. Environmental and social data is collected for each forest, to assess the benefits they provide over time.



English Oak (*Quercus Robur*)

Also known as common oak, this deciduous species grows up to 20 – 40m tall and matures to form a broad, spreading crown with sturdy branches beneath.

Its leaves are around 10cm long and have four to five lobes with smooth edges. The leaves have almost no stem and grow in bunches. Its long, yellow catkins distribute pollen into the air. Acorns are on stalks and in cupules, turning brown as they ripen then fall to the ground. The flower and leaf buds of English Oak feed caterpillars. When the fallen leaves break down in autumn the rich leaf mould supports invertebrates such as the stag beetle, and fungi. And holes and crevices in the bark are nesting spots for the pied flycatcher, redstart and marsh tit. Bats are also known to roost in old woodpecker holes or under loose bark, as well as feed on the supply of insects.



Sessile Oak (*Quercus Petraea*)

The leaves of this oak do have stalks and its acorns don't – the opposite of the English Oak. Oak trees can support more than 2,300 species of wildlife. The hundred of insects they play host to are a food source for birds and their acorns for squirrels, badgers and deer.



Silver Birch (*Betula Pendula*)

With white bark year round, this tree is easily identified. Other distinguishing features are its rough twigs and triangular leaves with a toothed edge that turn yellow in autumn. This deciduous tree can reach 30 metres when mature and forms a light canopy, with elegant, drooping branches. It bears both male and female catkins, the yellow-brown long drooping catkins are male and the short, green upright ones female.



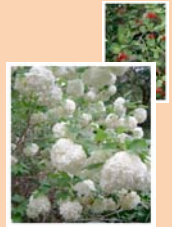
Hazel (*Corylus Avellana*)

Hazel grows as a stout shrub or small tree with stems coming from the base. In winter it has long, yellow catkins; in spring and summer green leaves and in autumn nuts and yellow leaves.



Crab Apple (*Malus Sylvestris*)

Mature trees can be up to 10m high and live for a century! They have long been associated with love and marriage. It was said that if you throw the pips into the fire while saying the name of your love, the love is true if the pips explode.



Guelder Rose (*Viburnum Opulus*)

Guelder rose is one of the prettiest of the native species and not a rose at all. It has many attributes including creamy white flowers then bright red berries which hang on well into winter. The reason is the seed dispersers prefer to eat more palatable fruits first, turning to the guelder berries only when food is scarce. The guelder rose features on the independence monument in Kyiv, where the Slavic goddess Berehynia holds a gold-plated branch in her arms.



Alder (*Alnus Glutinosa*)

Mature trees can reach around 28 metres tall, living for about 60 years, and growing in a conical shape. Its twigs have a light brown, spotted stem which turns red towards the top. Young twigs are sticky to the touch. They have both male and female flowers. The male catkins are pendulous, up to 6cm long and the female catkins are in groups of 3- 8 on each stalk, starting out as red cones before turning green then brown after pollination. They open up to release their seeds on the wind, the cones staying on the tree.



Blackthorn (*Prunus Spinosa*)

Notable for its early spring white blossoms and its late autumn sloes, this horny shrub is exceptionally hardy and can form dense hedges providing nectar for pollinators and food for wildlife. Its durable wood was traditionally used for tools, no doubt one reason why it is so abundant in rural hedgerows.



Hawthorn (*Crataegus Monogyna*)

Famed for its pale pink, highly-scented blossom which appears in May, mature trees can reach a height of 15 metres and are characterised by spiny twigs emerging from the same point as the buds in winter, distinguishing them from blackthorn which have buds on the spines.



Goat Willow (*Salix Caprea*)

Pussy willow trees can live for 300 years! The bark is grey-brown and develops diamond-shaped fissures with age. Twigs are hairy at first but become smooth, and can appear red-yellow in sunlight. The male catkins resemble cats' paws. Unlike most willows, the leaves are oval rather than long and thin.



Grey Willow (*Salix Cinerea*)

The grey willow serves as a vital lifeline for various wildlife. Birds such as chiffchaff and long-tailed tits shelter in its branches while bees and other pollinators rely on its catkins during early spring for food. Its leaves are a food source for the caterpillars of several species of moth and the grey willow plays a small but significant part contributing to carbon sequestration.



Aspen (*Populus Tremula*)

Not strictly a poplar but a close relative, the aspen (or quaking aspen) gets its name from the way its small, serrated leaves tremble and rustle in a breeze. The trees are relatively short lived, to around 50 years, but they tend to spread by suckering to form a small colony.



Wild Cherry (*Prunus Avium*)

This ancestor of cultivated cherries is conspicuous in spring with its white blossom of single cup shaped flowers, followed by shiny red berries in June and good autumn leaf colour. It can easily reach 10 metres in 10 years, ultimately reaching 25m in ideal conditions. The greenish yellow-brown wood is very popular in the furniture industry and much used as veneer for music instruments and different tools.