Discover Highbury Trees

Highbury Park, on the border of Kings Heath and Moseley, has over a thousand trees of all ages and varieties. In every season there is something to lift the spirits – fresh spring leaves, autumn colours and the tracery of winter twigs. The trees also support an abundance of wildlife – woodpeckers (3 species), bats, hundreds of insects, fungi and tiny creatures in the leaf litter.

An Ever-Changing Treescape

The park landscape is always changing. There have been the following major periods of tree management in different areas of the park.

1700's - fields with hedges where trees such as oak and ash were allowed to mature.

1700-1800's Henbury's Estate. The Estate owners introduced ornamental trees including Deodar Cedar, pines, Golden Yew and Holm Oak.

1878 - 1914 Highbury Estate. Landscape design by Edward Milner included retention of hedgerow trees and the planting of the Beech Copse. Other ornamental trees were planted for visual protection and tolerance to pollution.

1990's - tree planting to celebrate the fortieth year of the Queen's accession including magnolias, eucalyptus, the pinetum and *Nothofagus antarctica* by the Beech Copse.

Present time - Trees need replacing each year. Some areas are planted with specimen ornamental trees. In other areas planting of native trees, e.g. Field Maple, is more appropriate. Trees are often planted in commemoration. Historic apple and pear trees have been planted in Highbury Community Orchard.

To find out more about Highbury

Highbury Park Friends
www.highburyparkfriends.org.uk
Birmingham Parks Ranger Service
www.birmingham.gov.uk/parkrangers
Chamberlain Highbury Trust
www.chamberlainhighbury trust.co.uk
Four Seasons
0121 449 2263
Highbury Community Orchard
www.peopleandland.org.uk

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Highbury trees - associated flora and fauna.

Tree Survey

Highbury Park Friends have mapped over 500 of the older trees in the park comprising more than 70 species. They found **38 Veteran trees** with girths over 3 metres. A Common Oak had the largest girth at 515 cm closely followed by a Beech at 420 cm. All tree survey data can be seen on our website.

Management of trees

Trees are checked regularly to ensure the safety of park users, in particular along formal paths. Woodland areas are coppiced by Ranger-led volunteers creating glades where primroses and campion can thrive.

Dead Wood

Log piles and dead tree stumps are left to provide homes for the hundreds of creatures that live in them until they return to the soil. Lesser stag beetle larvae live within dead tree stumps for a few years. Bats nest underneath loose bark. A single tree stump had Stock Dove, Nuthatch and Tree Creeper nesting in holes of different sizes.

Lichens

In clean air, most trees would be covered with lichens of many sorts. **Twenty years ago in Highbury Park there were just 2 species, now there are more than 15 with more found each year.** They are recolonising the urban area after many years of sulphur dioxide pollution. However at present only those that can tolerate nitrogen pollution are thriving.

Fungi

Fungi sprout up all over the park in the autumn and are an essential part of the trees health. Their 'roots' may provide vital nutrients to the trees and the fungi receive sugars from the trees as they photosynthesise.

Explore Highbury as a Tree Detective!

Time to get outside, grab those walking boots or wellies and go on a hunt to find all the trees on our Highbury Tree Trail!

Tick off each tree you discover in the boxes below.

1. ☐ Fern-Leaf Beech
2. ☐ Deodar Cedar
3. ☐ Sallow
4. ☐ Sweet Chestnut
5. ☐ Alder
6. ☐ Lombardy Poplar
7. ☐ Ash
8. ☐ Oak
9. ☐ Weeping Willow
10. ☐ Persian Ironwood
11. ☐ Blue Atlas Cedar
12. ☐ Horse Chestnut
13. ☐ Fruit Tunnel

Activities for families: As you walk around the park, why not also try one of the activities below?

Colour Dabs Book Mark

Materials - a peice of card 4cm x 12cm and Glue

Just before you start cover the card with glue leaving a little bit at the bottom to hold on to.
Collect as many different colours as you can. Take a small piece of leaf (about the size a large insect might bite!) and stick it onto your piece of card. Fill your card with colour. When you get home, cover it with sellotape and you have your own original book mark. You might want to try collecting shades of just one colour.

Eye in the Sky

(A cloudy day activity.)
Materials – a mirror

When you reach an area of woodland imagine having an eye on the top of your head and the sort of views you might see. Whilst holding a mirror in your hands and walking, slowly, looking only into the mirror, gives a view you would not normally get.

Catch a shadow (A sunny day activity.)

Materials – a large piece of white paper.

Although there are shadows all around us we never really notice them. Try different ways of catching a great tree, leaf or plant shadow. A shadow sometimes reveals details that you would not normally see such as tiny bumps on a stem or hairs on a leaf. By changing where you hold your paper you can have fun changing the focus of the shadow.

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Walking and exploring