

Beech

Fagus sylvatica



What to look for

Magnificent deciduous tree that can grow up to 40m tall

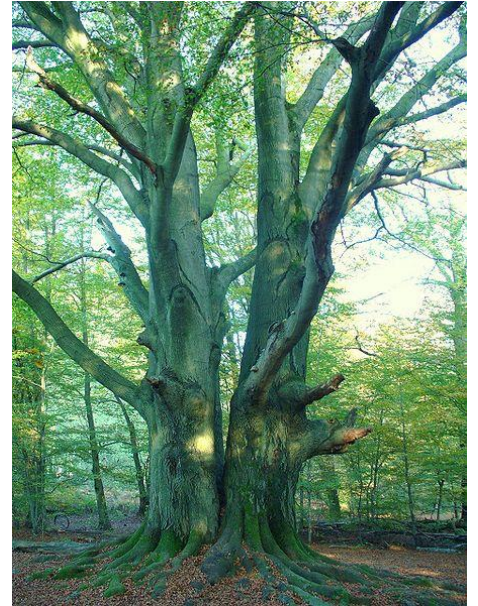
Bark is smooth, silvery-grey

Leaves are pointed ovals, with slightly wavy edges

Cigar shaped buds open to reveal the young leaves which are a delicate yellow-green, turning to shiny dark green by late spring/early summer

Leaves turn from pale yellow through to deep orange/red in autumn

The triangular nuts ripen to a shiny rich brown and are held in a prickly, four-lobed casing



Where found

Either in mixed woodland or standing alone, usually on chalky or sandy soils

When to look

Leaves in April/May

Leaves tint during September and October

Ripe fruit in October

Leaves drop around late October



Did you know?

More than 2000 species of fungi grow in association with beech. Fungi are important in enhancing the tree's uptake of water and nutrients from the soil

Beech forests are very dark and few species of plant are able to survive on the forest floor

Beech nut oil was used in the 19th century England for cooking and in lamps

Beech timber has been used in the manufacture of gunpowder and as a source of creosote

Chips of beech wood are used as a fining agent in the brewing of Budweiser beer

Beech wood pulp is used as the basis for manufacturing a textile fibre known as Modal

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