

# Ash

*Fraxinus excelsior*



WOODLAND  
TRUST

## What to look for

Elegant deciduous tree growing up to 40m high with a tall-domed, open crown

Young trees have smooth, grey bark that becomes dark and fissured with age

Buds are black

Flowers, which look like coral growths, appear before the leaves

Leaves usually have about 3-6 pairs of leaflets that are distinctively pointed. They turn yellow in autumn

Winged fruits hang in clusters (keys) and turn brown after leaf fall



## Where found

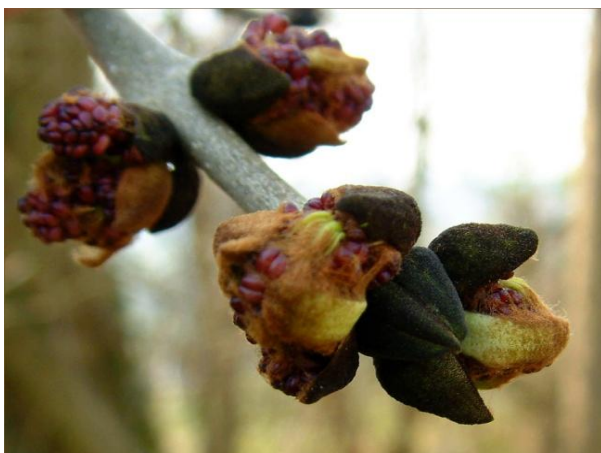
Found on all but the poorest and most acid ground

Common in woods, along hedgerows and in streets and parks - rare in northern Scotland

## When to look

Flowers in April, leaves in May

Leaves drop around late October



### Did you know?

Ash wood is extremely strong, lending itself to a variety of purposes, especially handles for tools

It has a low moisture content and can be burned the day it is felled. When dried, ash logs burn with a clear blue flame and put out a lot of heat, making them ideal for winter fuel

Its common name goes back to the Old English *æsc*, meaning spears made of ash wood

Before the introduction of quinine a bitter tonic was made from the bark and used to treat malaria, once common in Europe

The ash tree belongs to the same family of plants, called the Oleaceae, as the olive tree

Ash is a popular wood for making electric guitar bodies

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