

# Tree Identification Guide

This guide can be used for the OPAL Tree Health Survey and OPAL Air Survey



## Oak

*Quercus species*



## Ash

*Fraxinus excelsior*



## Rowan

*Sorbus aucuparia*



## Elder

*Sambucus nigra*



## Maple

*Acer species*



## Hawthorn

*Crataegus montana*



## Horse chestnut

*Aesculus hippocastanum*



## Sycamore

*Acer pseudoplatanus*



## London Plane

*Platanus x acerifolia*



## Sweet chestnut

*Castanea sativa*



### Beech

*Fagus sylvatica*



### Whitebeam

*Sorbus aria*



### Cherry

*Prunus species*



### Willow

*Salix species*



### Hornbeam

*Carpinus betulus*



### Crab apple

*Malus sylvatica*



### Birch

*Betula species*



### Poplar

*Populus species*



### Hazel

*Corylus avellana*



### Lime

*Tilia species*



### Elm

*Ulmus species*



### Alder

*Alnus species*



↓ Start here ↓

Does the tree have needles or scale-like leaves?



**Conifers**

If you have found a conifer, choose another tree for your OPAL survey

No

Does the tree have simple leaves?



a **compound leaf** – made up of several leaflets

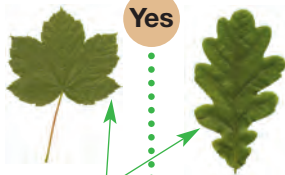
No

Yes



a **simple leaf** – a single leaf attached to a stalk

Do the leaves have lobes?



Lobes are large projections at the edge of the leaf

Yes

Do the veins spread out from a single point?



veins spread out from a single point at the top of the leaf stalk – a palmate leaf

Yes

Do the veins spread from several places along the leaf stalk – a pinnate leaf?



veins spread from several places along the leaf stalk – a pinnate leaf

No

Does the leaf have a toothed edge?

Teeth are small projections on the edge of the leaf



**Sycamore**

Yes

Do the leaves grow in opposite pairs?



**Maple**

Check: Maple leaves have more rounded lobes, while London Plane and Sycamore have more pointed lobes

Yes

**Hawthorn**



Yes

Are the twigs thorny?

**Oak**



No

**London Plane**



No



**Horse chestnut**

Do all the leaflets grow from the end of the stalk?

Yes

Does the leaf have two or three pairs of leaflets?

Yes

**Elder**

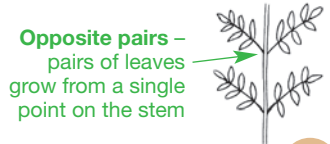
Check: Elder leaves release a pungent smell when you rub them



Do the leaves grow in opposite pairs on the twig?

No

(Make sure that you are looking at the leaves and not just the leaflets)



**Opposite pairs** – pairs of leaves grow from a single point on the stem

**Ash**

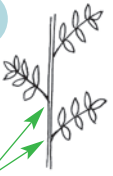
Check: Ash has black buds



Do the leaves grow in alternate pairs on the twig?

No

**Alternate pairs** – each leaf grows from a different place on the stem



**Rowan**

Check: Rowan never has black buds like Ash. Rowan leaflets are deeper toothed than Ash. Look out for red berries on Rowan in autumn



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Is the leaf at least twice as long as it is wide?

No

Yes

Is the leaf shorter than 10 cm?

Yes

No



**Sweet chestnut**  
Check: If there are 2 red spots at the top of the leaf stalk, it is probably a Cherry

Does the edge of the leaf have large teeth?

Yes

No

Are there 2 red spots at the top of the leaf stalk?

Yes

No



**Willow**



No

Does the leaf have a blunt or rounded tip?

Yes

**Alder**



**Hornbeam**

Yes



**Cherry**

Check: Cherry leaves have a wide range of sizes



**Beech**

Check: Beech leaves have a wavy edge

Does the leaf have a toothed edge?

Yes

No



**Birch**

Check you are looking at Birch not Alder. Alder has a rounded leaf tip, while Birch has a pointed leaf tip



**Whitebeam**

Is the leaf base asymmetrical?

No

Yes



**Elm**

Check: Elm leaves feel rough when rubbed between the fingers

Does the leaf bulge out more at one side?

No

Yes



**Hazel**

Check: Hazel leaves and leaf stems are hairy

Is the underside of the leaf pale?

No

Yes

Does the bud grow on a stalk?

Yes

**Crab apple**



Is the leaf tip a distinct point?

Yes

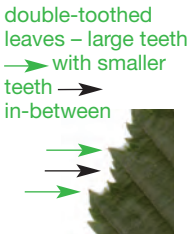


distinct point – it looks like the end of the leaf has been pinched

Is the leaf stalk flattened?

Yes

**Poplar**



double-toothed leaves – large teeth  
→ with smaller teeth  
→ in-between