

## 1 TREES & SHRUBS OF EAST MARSH

There are over 350 substantial trees on East Marsh. These include many native species, such as field maple, ash and oak, some unusual varieties of native trees, and many exotic and specimen trees. There are many varieties of:

**Poplar** Native black, hybrid black, weeping, Lombardy, Western balsam, grey, and aspen.

**Ash** Common, narrow leaf, single leaf, Raywood, and Westoff Glory.

### ALONG THE BANK OF THE OLD RIVER LEA

A great variety of trees from the GLC Tree Nursery were planted in the 1980s. They include:

**Raywood Ash (1)** Their leaves are a very intense green in the summer and become dark red in the autumn.

**Mulberry trees** along the river bank are now sufficiently mature to produce fruit. There are both white and black mulberries. The fruit of the black mulberry is good to eat and especially popular with blackbirds.

**Horse Chestnut** Some trees with white flowers and also the less common pink flowers or candles. Conkers in the autumn.

**Tree of Heaven** One of the last trees to come into leaf in the spring.

**Balsam Poplar (2)** One of the tallest trees along the river bank.

**Weeping Poplar** Fine specimens of this unusual variety.

**Aspen** In early spring the aspen trees are covered in long catkins which come out before the leaves. The leaves shake in the wind.

**Alder** In winter, alders keep their cones and catkins and are a good source of food for birds.

**Willow** Including some large crack willows near Lead Mill Stream.



1



2

# EAST MARSH, HACKNEY MARSHES - TREES & SHRUBS -



Above: View across frosty grass and goal posts to dark Raywood Ash, golden Horse Chestnuts and Weeping Poplar.

### PUBLIC TRANSPORT

#### Buses

236, 276, 308 & W15 to Homerton Rd.

242 Millfields Rd. and Cowbridge.

55, 56, 48 to Lea Bridge Rd; walk along Lee Navigation.

#### Trains

BR stations: Hackney Wick; Homerton.

This leaflet was prepared by Anne Woollett and Mike Trier with assistance from Ian Graham and Fried van Doorslaer. For copies of the leaflet and more information about East Marsh and Hackney Marshes and activities contact 020 8985 1256, or see

[www.hackneyenvironment.org.uk](http://www.hackneyenvironment.org.uk)

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Based on Collins mapping - [www.collinsmaps.com](http://www.collinsmaps.com)

## 2

**Oak** Some young oaks along the river bank. **Holm oak**, close to Balsam poplar (2), is evergreen and provides welcome shelter for birds through the winter.

**Rowan** has lovely white flowers in the spring and red berries in the autumn which provide a good source of food for birds.

**Norway Maple** Some near the sluice gate and by the changing rooms. Lovely yellow flowers in the spring, and autumn colour.

**Silver Birch** Some small trees with white bark, and delicate leaves and catkins.

**Field Maple** 'Winged' seeds and good autumn colour.

**Ash-leaf Maple** Flowers in red tassels in spring.

**Prunus or Cherry trees** In spring they have beautiful blossom, mainly white, but one tree at a strange angle after the gales in 1987 has stunning pink blossom (3). In autumn cherry leaves turn yellow and red.



3



4

One tree flowers through the winter. There is a bank of white flowering cherry near the bridge from Main Marsh whose flowers indicate the start of spring (4).

**Willow-leaved Pear** White pear blossom in the spring and small pear fruits in the autumn, but leaves which look like willows.

**Southern Beech or Nothofagus** With small leaves; probably the only ones in Hackney.

**Zelkova** Interestingly shaped and coloured trunks, and pointed leaves which go red in the autumn.

**Lime (5)** Leaves are pale when they first appear in spring. Bees are attracted by the pollen in lime flowers. Seeds like small balls.



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### 3 TREES & SHRUBS OF EAST MARSH



Above: New Spitalfields Market, almost hidden by tall, narrow leaf ash, pear, and smaller field maple.

#### ALONG THE BOUNDARY WITH SPITALFIELDS MARKET

The sluice gates on the Old River Lea near Spitalfields Market mark the position of the Lead Mill Stream. This was once an important water course running from the River Lea to Temple Mills. It has been diverted and put into a culvert, most recently when Spitalfields Market was built. It still forms the boundary between the boroughs of Hackney and Waltham Forest.

**Spitalfields Fruit and Vegetable Market**, with a blue and yellow building at its centre, runs along the northern edge of East Marsh. The market moved here in 1990 from its site close to Liverpool Street. The area was once a huge railway engineering works and sidings. The railways are coming back: the trains will run from King's Cross through Stratford to Europe and will be housed in new buildings being constructed on the other side of the Market.

Along the edge by Spitalfields there are many mature trees, including native and hybrid black poplars, **grey poplar**, **Norway maple**, **pear (6)**, and **ash** – both single leaf and narrow leaf varieties.



6



Above: This 1896 map of Hackney Marshes shows the Old River Lea (with the three loops, before they were removed) and Lead Mill Stream. The present-day East Marsh is the area enclosed between them, as far south as 'White Bridge'. The railway line (top right on the map) runs alongside the New Spitalfields Market (see inset map). The bridge connecting East Marsh to Hackney Main Marsh is in the position of the 'Old Ferry or White House'. Both maps are at the same scale.

### 4

**Native Black Poplar** Planted in 1890s when East Marsh came into public ownership, their dark, gnarly trunks tower above the Spitalfields buildings. Native black poplars are rare trees and they have been designated by GLA (Greater London Authority) as a London Flagship Species. In the spring their buds and leaves are red, becoming green as they get older.

When Spitalfields was built in the 1990s, a thick belt of native shrubs and trees was planted along that boundary:

**Bird Cherry** Growing under black poplars.

**Willows** with **pussy willows** in the spring.

**Field Maple (7)**, **Holly**, **Hornbeam**.

**Understorey plants** such as **Viburnum** and **Dogwood**, which provide shelter for birds, animals and insects.



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#### ALONG RUCKHOLT RD

On the eastern edge of East Marsh is a fine row of 40-year-old ash trees – the Westoff Glory variety.

Right: Most of these trees along Ruckholt Road will be felled for the 2012 Olympics, to make way for a car and coach park, and a huge land bridge connecting East Marsh to the Olympic Precinct.



#### See also EAST MARSH: HISTORY & HABITATS

#### Please help to protect the wildlife of Hackney Marshes:

- Always put your litter in a bin or take it home.
- If you have a dog, please keep it under control.
- Respect wildlife, plants and trees.