

Hackney Marshes and its Trees

Hackney Marshes came into public ownership in 1894. At this time some of the large mature trees (Native Black Poplar, Ash & Plane) were planted along River Lea and Lea Navigation (Wick Woodland), by Marshgate Bridge, and edges of Mabley Green and East Marsh.

In the 1960s, trees were planted along Ruckholt Road (Ash) and Homerton Road (Ash & Balsam Poplars), and along River Lea (hybrid Black Poplars & Willows). Since then, exotic and native tree species have been planted, many from GLC Tree Nursery. These include: Lime, Mulberry, Maples, Pear & Willow-leaved Pear, Southern Beech, Cedar & Alder. Over the last 15 years, Hackney Marsh User Group volunteers have planted trees, hedges and shrubs and created new woodlands. Wick Woodland was started in 1995 and Friends, Jubilee and Kingfisher Woods in 2000.

The trees are part of the heritage and history of the Marshes and add to its beauty as they change through the year. Blossom and bright new leaf-growth signal the start of the year; shade in the summer; the sound of wind through the leaves, bright fruits and colourful leaves in autumn; and in winter their shapes, and colour and patterning of their trunks.

Trees provide important wildlife habitats. They are home for many varieties of insect and bird. Insects living on leaves and on live and dead wood are a rich source of food for birds. Dead wood is left on site, whenever possible, as home for insects and invertebrates.

Tree Varieties on Hackney Marshes

Poplar. There are over 30 mature **native Black Poplar** and over 40 younger ones in Wick Woodland. This collection of this rare tree is unique in London. Other poplars include: **hybrid Black** (East Marsh); **Balsam** (Homerton Road and round edge of Marshes); **Aspen** (Crescent Wood & Wick Woodland); upright **Lombardy** (round North changing rooms); and **Grey** (East side of Marsh and Crescent Wood).

Plane. London Plane is a hybrid produced in C19 and widely planted in London streets and parks. Look for light patches where bark is shed and fruit like Christmas tree decorations. Rows planted on Mabley Green and Wick Woodland; and with Ash and Black Poplar along Lower Level.

Ash. Varieties include: **Common**; **Single-leaf**; **Narrow-leaf**; and **Raywood** with burgundy-coloured leaves in autumn (East Marsh, Mabley Green). Rows of Ash along Ruckholt Road (East Marsh) and Homerton Road/ Wick Woodland.

Oak. There are no very large Oaks but many **English Oaks** in meadow and new woodlands and self-seeded Oak in Wick Woodland. **Turkey Oak** at front of Depot and **Red Oak** along Lower Level. **Holm Oak** (evergreen with shiny leaves and tiny acorns) in North Wood.

Willow. Large **Crack Willows** along river bank of Main and East Marsh. Also **Goat Willow** with 'pussy willow' catkins in early spring.

TREES OF HACKNEY MARSHES



Cherry trees (12) on Homerton Road.



Whitebeam (13) in blossom, North Wood.



Black Poplars (1) and old River Lea.



Hawthorn berries (18).

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, Russell Miller, Annie Chipchase & Les Wilson. For copies of the leaflet and more information about Hackney Marshes and activities contact 020 8985 1256, or see

www.hackneyenvironment.org.uk

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Based on Collins mapping - www.collinsmaps.com

Maple. Leaves with five points and winged seeds. **Field Maple** in newly wooded areas, such as Spitalfields edge of East Marsh & Main Marsh. **Norway Maple:** large dark leaves turn yellow and sometimes red in autumn. Round edge of Main and East Marsh. **Silver Maple:** delicate deep cut leaves with silver underside; one of the first trees to change colour (yellow and red). By bridge to East Marsh. **Box Elder:** separate leaves, tassel-like flowers and tiny red fruits in East Wood.

Lime. Common and Small-leaved lime. Flowers often scented and attractive to bees. Round fruit on stalks.

Prunus or cherry. Shiny barks, blossom in spring, fruit is quickly eaten by birds. Attractive autumn colour.

Sorbus. Rowan trees with lacy leaves, white flowers in spring and red berries. **Whitebeam** leaves - white underside. North Wood.

Alder. With round leaves, catkins and cones (often dark older and younger green cones together). **Italian Alder** leaves more shiny and larger cones.

Chestnut. Horse Chestnut on East Marsh. **Sweet Chestnut** with prickly fruits in front of Depot. Cluster of young trees at north end of Marshes.

Malus. Crab Apples in North Wood, **Apples** in Wick Woodland, **Pears and Willow-leaved Pear** (white flowers and fruit like Pears but the leaves are grey like Willow) on East Marsh.

False Acacia: spines on branches and pea-like fruits.

Silver Birch: trunks look spectacular in winter sunlight (Wick Woodland and meadow).

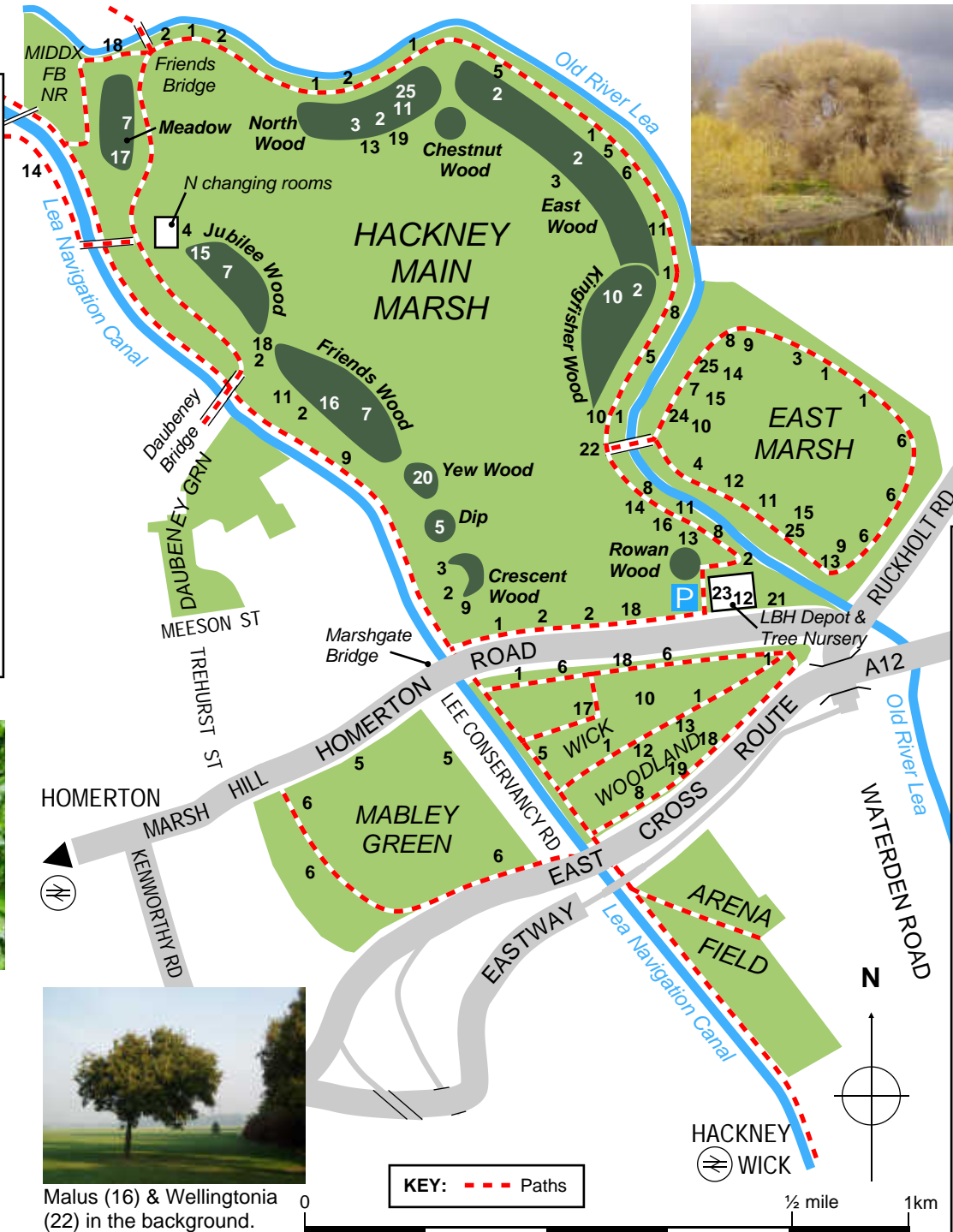
Hawthorn. Grows as a tree and a shrub in hedge along Homerton Road. White, aromatic flowers, and red haws (berries) – quickly eaten by birds (North end of Marshes).

Shrubs: Hazel (catkins in spring and nuts); **Viburnum** (white flowers, red fruit); **Buckthorn and Alder Buckthorn** (red and black berries); **Spindle** (pink flowers with orange seeds) in Wick Woodland and North Marsh; **Blackberry** (white flowers, and fruit which are eaten by birds, small mammals and local people); and **Dwarf Elder** (black fruit) in Wick Woodland and Crescent Wood: an unusual plant brought in with contents of barges.

Evergreens. Some trees retain their leaves in winter. **Yews:** cluster of Yew trees near Dip. **Holly:** East Marsh and Wick Woodland. **Cypress:** very tall hedge in Tree Nursery. **Cedar:** in Depot and near Lea Interchange. **Wellingtonia** near Bridge to East Marsh.

Exotic and unusual trees. Apart from native Black Poplars, Marshes are home to many unusual trees: **Catalpa** (Indian Bean Tree) in front of Depot; **Mulberry** with fruit loved by Blackbirds (East Marsh); **Southern Beech** (East Marsh).

TREES OF HACKNEY MARSHES



MIDDX FB NR

Lea Navigation Canal

DAUBENEY GRN

MEESON ST

HOMERTON MARSH

KEMWORTHY RD

HACKNEY WICK



Left: Willow (8) and native Black Poplar (1) by the old River Lea.



Below: Flowering Cherry (12) in January on the East Marsh bank of the old River Lea.



Malus (16) & Wellingtonia (22) in the background.

KEY: - - - Paths

1/2 mile 1km



AREAS OF HACKNEY MARSHES
Depot & Tree Nursery on Homerton Road have a fine collection of native and exotic trees, including Turkey Oak, Cherry, Cedar, Pines, Cypress hedge, Ginkgo, Whitebeam and Catalpa (Indian Bean Tree).
Dip: site of former changing rooms, at original level of Marshes. Row of Plane trees.
Lower Level: great walk along bank of old River Lea, at the original level of Marshes. Planes, Black Poplar and Ash from C19 and more recent planting, including Willow and Field Maple.
North & East Wood. Planted from 1980s with Balsam Poplar, Prunus, Grey Poplar, Box Elder, Holm Oak, Whitebeam, Horse and Sweet Chestnut, Crab Apple and Ash.
Homerton Road. Balsam Poplar and new hedge.
Wick Woodland: edged with mature Ash, native Black Poplars and Planes. Planted 1995–2000 with native species, including native Black Poplars.
East Marsh: edged with many fine and mature trees, exotic and native species.



Above left: Grey Poplar (3) by Crescent Wood with Plane (5) beyond. Above right: Horse Chestnut blossom (15) by north changing rooms.

SOME KEY TREES

1	Black Poplar
2	Balsam Poplar
3	Grey Poplar
4	Lombardy Poplar
5	Plane
6	Ash
7	Oak
8	Willow
9	Norway Maple
10	Field Maple
11	Lime
12	Prunus or Cherry
13	Sorbus
14	Alder
15	Horse Chestnut
16	Malus
17	Silver Birch
18	Hawthorn
19	Spindle
20	Yew
21	Cedar
22	Wellingtonia
23	Catalpa
24	Mulberry
25	Southern Beech

- 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.