



# Grange Park Tree Trail



Fermanagh & Omagh  
District Council  
Comhairle Ceantair  
Fhear Manach agus na hÓmaí



# Welcome to the Grange Park!

Hi there! Welcome to the Grange Park a place to learn, play and share. This Tree Tale Trail challenges you to find different trees in the park and discover more about them.

## Instructions:

Go and explore!

- ★ Follow the map to find each of the 8 tree trail posts around the park.
- ★ Try your best at drawing a leaf at each tree post. Let's see who knows their leaves best between your family and friends!
- ★ Read the fun facts about each tree.
- ★ Answer any quizzing questions on each page.
- ★ Continue around the park to find all 8 plaques!

We hope you enjoy the park today.  
Please do visit again.

**HAVE FUN!**

# Let's start!

## Ready steady...

My name is: .....

What is today's date? .....

I'm here today with:  my school  my family  my friend  other

Find the Welcome to Grange Park entrance sign and answer the following questions.

1. Find out how to say 'Welcome' in two other languages.

2. Find all 8 tree trail symbols and circle them on the map below.

How many trees can you see in the park from here? 10/100/ a gazillion?



## Activity



The park is a habitat for wildlife, like birds, bugs and bees. Your house and community is your habitat.

Trees are habitats too! Did you know an oak tree can support 2,300 different types of plants, animals, insects and fungi?

Let's see if you can complete this tree drawing

# Trees

release O<sub>2</sub> trunk branch

absorb CO<sub>2</sub>

fruit

who lives in a tree like this?

bark leaves

wildlife habitat roots spread deep and wide shady seat

In this space, you can draw a leaf of a tree you like. Or how about trying a bark rubbing? Put this sheet of paper against the tree bark and use your pencil or crayon to shade over the page. You should be able to see the deep grooves and wrinkles of the tree bark appear on your paper.

Circle the trees that are native to Northern Ireland.

# Trees

Lime

Horse Chestnut

Common Oak

Willow

Beech  
The pyramids of Egypt

Maple

Holly

Aspen

Irish Yew

Sycamore

Birch

Acacia

## Activity

Methuselah is a 4,853-year-old Great Basin bristlecone pine tree (*Pinus longaeva*) growing high in the White Mountains of Inyo County in eastern California. For many years, it was the world's oldest known living thing, until superseded by the discovery of another bristlecone pine in the same area with an age of 5,063 years.

There are buildings in Egypt that are about 5000 years old too! What are they? (*The answer is hidden on this page.*)

# Horse Chestnut

*Aesculus hippocastanum*

shiny conkers

knobbly bark

spiky chestnuts

tall  
big

sticky buds

giant

palmate leaves

deciduous

non native



Draw a horse chestnut leaf here  
or create a bark rubbing.

# Horse Chestnut

*Aesculus hippocastanum*

## Where in the World...

Horse Chestnut trees arrived here in the 16th century. They hail from southeast Europe, northern Greece and Albania in particular.

## Fact File

- Best known for their shiny brown nuts called 'conkers.'
- Have big, fanned leaves with 5-7 'fingers'... a bit like a hand!
- The buds are sticky... eewwwwwww!
- The first record of the game of 'conkers' is from the Isle of Wight in 1848.
- Before modern medicines, ground up conkers were fed to horses to cure them from coughs... maybe this is why they're called horse chestnut trees.

## Activity

### HUG A TREE

- Pick a tree and hug it with your friends! **Be careful not to scratch your face or poke your eyes!**
- Count how many people it takes to hug the tree.
- Measure your arm span (the distance from your right fingertips to your left fingertips).
- Add the measurements together to find out how big the tree's circumference is!
- Or take an average of the arm spans and multiply by the number of people.

Name of your tree \_\_\_\_\_

Number of people \_\_\_\_\_

Average arm span \_\_\_\_\_

Girth of tree \_\_\_\_\_

# Scots Pine

*Pinus sylvestris*

scented

beautiful

tall and slender

needles

red bark

skinky

native

squirrels

needles

Draw a Scots pine needle here  
or create a bark rubbing.



# Scots Pine



## Fact File

- Pines have waxy needles that hold onto water very effectively.
- They are evergreen, which means they don't lose their leaves in winter.
- Pine cones can predict the weather - they close up when it's going to rain!
- Pines were traditionally planted to mark routes or landmarks in the countryside, as their beautiful, slender form and height made them stand out from other trees.



## Activity

### Can you squirrel away your food?

Red squirrels love eating the seeds from pine cones! Grey squirrels like to eat acorns and beech nuts. They both store food in autumn for those cold days in winter. Squirrels need a good memory to find their seeds and nuts again! Could you survive as a squirrel?

- Collect 5 nuts or cones (stones will do if it is spring/summer) from the park.
- Find a good place to store or bury them.
- Go off for a walk or finish this trail, then come back and see if you can find them!
- Why not really test yourself and store the nuts on one visit to the park, then look for them the next time you come!

# Cherry *Prunus spp*

beautiful blossom

juicy berries

cherry wood

oval leaves

ringed lenticels

deciduous

happy birds

Draw a Cherry leaf here  
or create a Bark rubbing.

# Cherry trees

Many people will know the exotic cherry trees that originate from China and Japan, which now grow in our parks and gardens. In Chinese culture, the cherry blossom is a significant symbol of power. Whereas for the Japanese, cherry blossom represents the transience of life. In fact, cherry is the national tree of Japan, and the blossom is the national symbol.

## Fact File

- Wild cherry and bird cherry trees are native to Northern Ireland!
- Both are excellent for wildlife and as the name suggests, birds love their cherries.
- The bark has decorative grain around the outside, which sometimes flakes off.
- The leaves are serrated, which means slightly jaggy.
- The timber is prized for furniture, wood-turning and carving because of the rich reddish-brown colour.

## Tree Coat of Arms

Many families have coats of arms with objects in them that represent their character or where they come from. Countries have national symbols, and schools and sports teams also use symbols. What symbol represents you?

Find a tree, flower or animal you like in the park and create your own coat of arms. You can use natural materials from the park and make it on the ground or scribble your ideas below.

## Activity

### Some inspiration....

- oak = bravery
- hazel = playfulness
- ash = wisdom
- holly = truth
- birch = new beginnings
- willow = freedom

# Beech

*Fagus sylvatica*

oval leaves

beechnuts masts

bark

smooth grey

shady seat

busy squirrels

non native

deciduous

Draw a Beech leaf here  
or create a bark rubbing.

# Beech

## Fact File

- A majestic tree that can grow very tall - up to 40 metres!
- The beech leaf is oval with smooth edges.
- Beech nuts are shaped in 4-parted husks.
- The timber is used for fuel, furniture, piles, tool handles, kitchen utensils and sports equipment.
- The nuts are an important source of protein, particularly for pigs!
- Beech trees are native to southern England but are now widespread in Northern Ireland.

## Activity

So far, you have seen 4 different species of trees. Can you draw their leaves onto this branch? (If it's winter and you can't see many leaves, make up some leaf shapes using patterns you can see around you).



# Oak *Quercus robur*

woodland

biodiversity

native

deciduous

squiggly leaf

acorns

From little acorns do mighty oaks grow  
wonderful wildlife



Draw a Oak leaf here  
or create a bark rubbing.

# Oak

## Fact File

- The best native tree for wildlife - oak supports hundreds of species, from caterpillars to beetles and birds to squirrels.
- Oak trees can live over 700 years!
- The wood is super strong! No wonder it was used to make mighty ships for war.
- The oak leaf has a squiggly shape.
- Acorn seeds fall from the tree in autumn.
- The Bartek tree is an ancient oak tree (670 years old) in Poland that has local fame due to its association with the Battle of Vienna in 1683.

## Activity

**This folklore poem can predict the weather for the summer:**

If the oak before the ash,  
Then we'll only have a splash.  
If the ash before the oak,  
Then we'll surely have a soak!



Some evidence suggests that oak is now leafing before ash on a regular basis, which could be linked to climate change!

Climate change can be detected by changes in wildlife behaviour each year. Be a citizen scientist and record your local wildlife each spring and autumn. Look out for signs of the seasons such as the first bud burst, the first swallow arriving in your garden or the first leaf turning brown. Record your sightings with the Woodland Trust Nature's Calendar at <https://naturescalendar.woodlandtrust.org.uk/>. This will help scientists monitor changes in the seasons and how our wildlife is adapting to climate change.

### Be a scientist...

Walk around the park and record 3 signs in nature that it is spring/summer/autumn/winter, depending on what season it is today!

# Wildflower Meadow

knapweed

cornflower

sweet vernal grass

ox eye daisy

red campion

pretty flowers

butterflies

bumblebees

biodiversity

clover

poppies

Can you draw  
the pretty flowers?



# Wildflower Meadow

A wildflower meadow is an important habitat for lots of animals and insects. Bees and butterflies need nectar and pollen during spring/summer. Birds love the seeds you find on grasses and old flowers during autumn/winter.

- Can you count how many different types of grass and wildflower you can see in this meadow?
- Now count how many different types of grass and wildflower you can see in the lawns throughout the park?

Which area has more plant species?  Meadow  Lawn

So, which is better for wildlife?  Meadow  Lawn

## Activity

### Minibeast Hunt - Hurray!

You can download minibeast identification sheets from [www.biodiversityni.com](http://www.biodiversityni.com) or from the Fermanagh and Omagh District Council's Biodiversity website [www.fermanaghomagh.com/services/parks-and-open-spaces/biodiversity/](http://www.fermanaghomagh.com/services/parks-and-open-spaces/biodiversity/)

- In summer, look through the meadow for ladybirds, butterflies, caterpillars, bumblebees, beetles, spiders and more!
- In winter, look for spiders, beetles, millipedes and woodlice. They may be lurking in the fallen leaves, dead grass or under stones and logs.

Fill an old basket with **pine cones** and **leaves** or **shredded newspaper**.

Place it in a sheltered spot, or in your shed or garage.

Collect lots of **sticks**, find a quiet, sheltered spot and pile them up. Stuff the gaps with **smaller sticks** and dry leaves.

pine cone palace



Towering Twigs

# Irish Yew

*Taxus baccata fastigiata*

happy birds

very old

churchyards

evergreen

coniferous

green needles

red berries

poisonous

happy birds

Draw a Irish Yew needle here  
or create a bark rubbing.

# Irish Yew

## Fact File

- It is thought that all Irish yew trees are descended from one that still grows today in Florencecourt, Co. Fermanagh.
- Yew trees can grow to be over 1000 years old!
- These trees were often planted near burial grounds, as they are symbols of immortality and death.
- The wood is so hard that a yew fence post is said to outlive one made of iron!

## Activity

This picture was taken in the Grange Park in the early 1900's, showing a family driving past the yew trees that are still there today! Many families in this era created large, landscaped gardens and planted numerous trees to showcase their wealth and provide timber to heat their house. Could you imagine living in the park?



Photo kindly provided by  
Dr Haldane Mitchell

Imagine the Grange Park is your back garden!  
Where would be your favourite place to hang out?

### Be Like the Trees

Stand still with your arms outstretched like a tree.

How long can you stand still?

What did you think about when you were still and silent?

# Across the Seasons...

As a year passes, regular changes occur in the weather. These weather changes are divided into four parts - the seasons. The four seasons are winter, spring, summer and autumn.

All plants go through a cycle as the temperature changes throughout the year.

**Winter** Deciduous trees lose their leaves to conserve water. Trees become dormant to save energy.

**Spring** New leaves grow and flowers bloom.

**Summer** Flowers begin to produce seeds and wildlife thrives.

**Autumn** Leaves begin to fall, and fruits and seeds ripen. Seeds will lie dormant until next spring.

Can you match the name of the tree to the leaf/seed/nut/berry?

Willow

Lime (linden)

Birch

Alder

Hazel

Beech

Holly

# Take Home a Pine Cone!

Before you leave the park today,  
Pick up some pine cones on your way,  
Make some feeders to delight,  
Your feathered friends' appetites.

## You will need:

- Pine cones
- String or wool
- 1 part lard at room temperature
- 2 parts wild bird seed
- A handful of mild, grated cheese

## Cheesy pine cones

1



Tie a length of string around the end of each pine cone.

2



Make sure the lard is room temperature, and tip it into a bowl. Add the bird seed and cheese.

3

Roll up your sleeves and use your fingers to mix the lard, seed and cheese together.



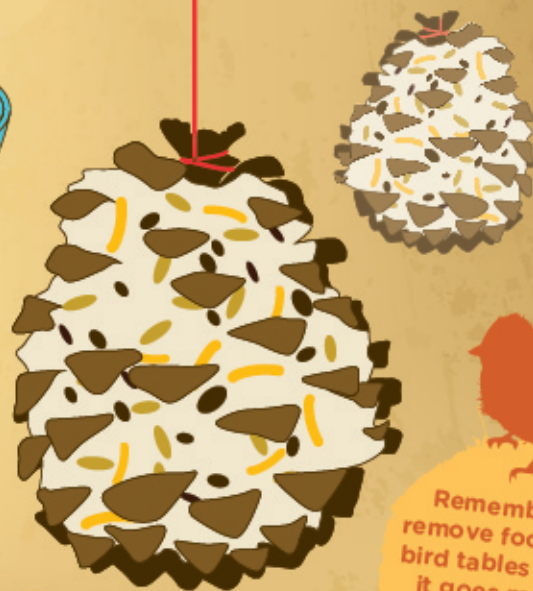
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Squish the mixture into the gaps in the pine cones. Make sure you push it in firmly so nothing falls out.



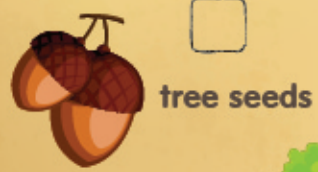
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Hang your pine cones from tree branches. Who comes to visit?



Remember to remove food from bird tables before it goes mouldy or it could make birds ill.

# Things I saw today.....



# Tree-mendous Tree Tale Trail Quiz

Congratulations!

You are nearly finished the Tree Trail workbook! Now it's time to take the Tree-mendous Tree Trail Quiz!!

Let's see how quick you can answer these questions. Most of the answers are in the workbook, but some you must work out for yourself!

**Ready, Steady, Go!**

1. How old is the oldest tree in the world?

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2. What do you call the tree that conkers come from?

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3. What is the national symbol of Japan?

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4. How tall can a beech tree grow to?

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5. Name two signs in nature that spring has arrived.

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6. What is a habitat?

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7. Name one wildflower that grows in a meadow.

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8. Name one insect you might find in the park.

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9. 9) What does a red squirrel like to eat?

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10. Out of all trees you have seen today, what is your favourite?

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**Yayyyyy! Great job!**

Fermanagh & Omagh District Council strives to make the Grange Park an inclusive space for all to enjoy.

The Council is developing Park Management Plans for key parks across the district, which will support our commitment to obtaining and maintaining Green Flag status in several parks including the Grange Park. An essential element of Park Management Plans are identifying existing habitats and species that require protection and management, and to seek out opportunities to enhance, restore and promote biodiversity in order to meet our Biodiversity Duty.

Gratitude is extended to the Woodland Trust for supplying some of the educational resources featured within this booklet.

For further information about opportunities to enjoy walks and wildlife activities in Fermanagh and Omagh, contact the Council Biodiversity Team at Fermanagh & Omagh District Council, The Grange, Mountjoy Road, Omagh, Co. Tyrone BT79 7BL.

This document is available online at [www.fermanaghomagh.com](http://www.fermanaghomagh.com) and on request in other languages and formats.

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