

British native trees and shrubs and their status in Cornwall

With the increasing emphasis on planting native trees and shrubs for biodiversity and to maintain local character and distinctiveness it is important to understand which species are native and common in and within Cornwall. This list contains those trees and shrubs generally considered to be British natives (Based upon Forestry Commission Practice Note 8) and comments on their status in Cornwall (based upon L J Margetts and RW David - A Review of the Cornish Flora 1980). Some additional comments are included from experience of Cornwall Council staff.

Cornwall Council encourages the use of locally native trees and shrubs for planting in rural areas and around the urban fringes - **"Bring the countryside into the urban rather than the urban into the countryside!"** Natural regeneration is encouraged where feasible and stock from local provenance (Cornwall if possible. If not, SW England, native seed zone 305) is preferred for planting. There may be occasions where native trees and shrubs are not sufficient alone to meet the planting objectives. In all cases trees and shrubs commonly found in the locality should be favoured to maintain the character of the area. We have included a few commonly found climbing plants but we would recommend that these are generally not planted but allowed to colonise naturally.

Common name	Latin name	Native to Cornwall?	Notes
Maple, field	<i>Acer campestre</i>	V. rare	Present mostly in planted hedges possibly native in a few stations in the N and SE
Alder, common	<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>	Yes	Common and widespread by rivers and streams
Birch, silver	<i>Betula pendula</i>	Yes	Frequent and widespread
Birch, downy	<i>Betula pubescens</i>	Yes	Frequent and widespread, prefers damper ground than <i>B. pendula</i>
Box	<i>Buxus sempervirens</i>	Introduced	
Hornbeam	<i>Carpinus betulus</i>	Introduced	Frequent but nearly always planted
Dogwood	<i>Cornus sanguinea</i>	Localised	Only in E, frequent in Tamar Estuary
Hazel	<i>Corylus avellana</i>	Yes	Common and widespread
Hawthorn, Midland	<i>Crataegus laevigata</i>	No	Extremely uncommon
Hawthorn, common	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	Yes	Common and widespread (possibly subsp. <i>nordica</i>)
Broom	<i>Cytisus scoparius</i>	Yes	Common throughout in suitable habitats
Spurge laurel	<i>Daphne laureola</i>	Very Rare	Mostly bird introductions
Spindle	<i>Euonymus europaeus</i>	Localised	Widespread and frequent in east, less so in west and absent from West Penwith
Beech	<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>	Introduced	Frequent throughout but decidedly uncommon in far west.
Buckthorn, alder	<i>Frangula alnus</i>	Yes	widely distributed E of Hayle and Helston but never common
Ash	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	Yes	Common and widespread
Holly	<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	Yes	Common and widely distributed
Juniper	<i>Juniperus communis</i>	Extremely localised	Native to one part of the Lizard, in a distinct form
Privet	<i>Ligustrum vulgare</i>	Yes	Frequent throughout County
Apple, crab	<i>Malus sylvestris</i> subsp <i>sylvestris</i>	Probably introduced	Extremely rare
Pine, Scots	<i>Pinus sylvestris</i>	Introduced	
Poplar, grey	<i>Populus canescens</i>	Introduced	
Poplar, black	<i>Populus nigra</i> var. <i>betulifolia</i>	Introduced	Not known in Cornwall
Aspen	<i>Populus tremula</i>	Rare	Except area between Bodmin Moor and Tamar
Cherry, wild /gean	<i>Prunus avium</i>	Yes	Scattered but absent from West Penwith
Cherry, bird	<i>Prunus padus</i>	Introduced	Uncommon and always planted
Blackthorn	<i>Prunus spinosa</i>	Yes	Common and widely distributed



Common name	Latin name	Native to Cornwall?	Notes
Oak, sessile	Quercus petraea	Yes	Common and widely distributed
Oak, common	Quercus robur	Yes	Common and widely distributed
Buckthorn, purging	Rhamnus catharticus	No	
Rose, field	Rosa arvensis l	Yes	Common
Rose, dog	Rosa canina	Yes	Common
Pear, Plymouth	Pyrus cordata	Extremely rare	Confined to one locality and heavily protected. Do not propagate or plant
Butcher's broom	Ruscus aculeatus	Localised	Widespread as a plant of rocky cliffs along S coast, also occurring as an introduction elsewhere
Willow, white	Salix alba	Localised	Widely scattered in a few localities
Willow, eared	Salix aurita	yes	Common
Willow, goat	Salix caprea	Yes	Common
Willow, grey	Salix cinerea subsp oleifolia	Yes	Widespread. Our common willow
Willow, crack	Salix fragilis	Localised	Scattered in a few localities
Willow, bay	Salix pentandra	Introduced	Rare
Willow, purple	Salix purpurea	Probably introduced	Extremely rare
Willow, creeping	Salix repens	Rare	Dune slacks and coastal marsh
Willow, creeping	Salix repens/arenaria	Yes	A common heathland plant
Willow, almond	Salix triandra	Very rare	Very rare and localised
Willow, osier	Salix viminalis	Yes	Frequent and widespread in marshy places and by streams
Elder	Sambucus nigra	Yes	Common and widespread.
Whitebeam	Sorbus aria sensu lato	Introduced	Uncommon
Rowan	Sorbus aucuparia	Yes	Frequent but more common in wooded valleys in the east
Wild service tree	Sorbus torminalis	V. localised	More frequent in extreme NE and SE
Lime, small-leaved	Tilia cordata	Introduced	Always recognised as planted
Lime, large-leaved	Tilia platyphyllos	Introduced	Always recognised as planted
Gorse	Ulex europaeus	Yes	
Elm, wych	Ulmus glabra*	Yes	Common and widely distributed (probably the only native)
Wayfaring tree	Viburnum lantana	Introduced	
Guelder rose	Viburnum opulus	Yes	Frequent but less so in west and absent from west Penwith
Traveller's joy	Clematis vitalba	Localised	Common and widely distributed along coast, rarely far inland
Honeysuckle	Lonicera periclymenum	Yes	Common and widespread.

Some non British native species found in the Cornish countryside

Common name	Latin name	Notes
Poplar, white	Populus alba	Often planted near the coast and for colour. Frequently prone to windblow
Poplar, Italian	Populus x canadensis	Widely planted in a number of clones but can be prone to canker
Chestnut, sweet	Castanea sativa	Frequent as a planted tree but also self sown
Oak, evergreen	Quercus ilex	Widely planted and occasionally regenerates from seed
Oak, Turkey	Quercus cerris	Widely planted and occasionally regenerates from seed
Elm, Cornish	Ulmus minor var. Cornubiensis*	Common and widespread
Elm, Davey's	Ulmus minor var. Daveyi*	Localised across County and showing some resistance to elm disease
Sycamore	Acer pseudoplatanus	Common and widespread naturalised tree (most common non woodland tree)
Chestnut, Horse	Aesculus hippocastaneum	Frequent as planted tree
Lime, common	Tilia x europaea	Frequent and widespread introduction in more wooded parts of the County

* Elms are notoriously difficult to identify and there is little agreement on naming. Most elms have been decimated by elm disease since the late 1970's and only a few mature trees survive although young regeneration from suckers is frequent throughout the county and should be encouraged.

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