

Copper Beech

Highfield Park Tree Trail: Number 4

Latin/Botanical Name: *Fagus sylvatica purpurea*

Range: Europe.

Height: Up to 40m.

Uses: Similar to common beech, timber is used for a variety of purposes, including fuel (traditionally used to smoke herring), furniture, cooking utensils, tool handles and sports equipment. Edible nuts were once used to feed pigs, it is also a popular hedging plant.

Description: The bark is smooth, thin and grey, twigs are slender and grey with a zig-zag shape. Leaf buds are coppery and torpedo-shaped, leaves are coppery to deep purple in colour. Tassel-like male catkins hang in April and May.

Interesting fact: Copper beeches appeared as natural mutants of the common beech in various parts of Europe, as early as the 15th century. In Switzerland legend has it that they appeared where five brothers were murdered.



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