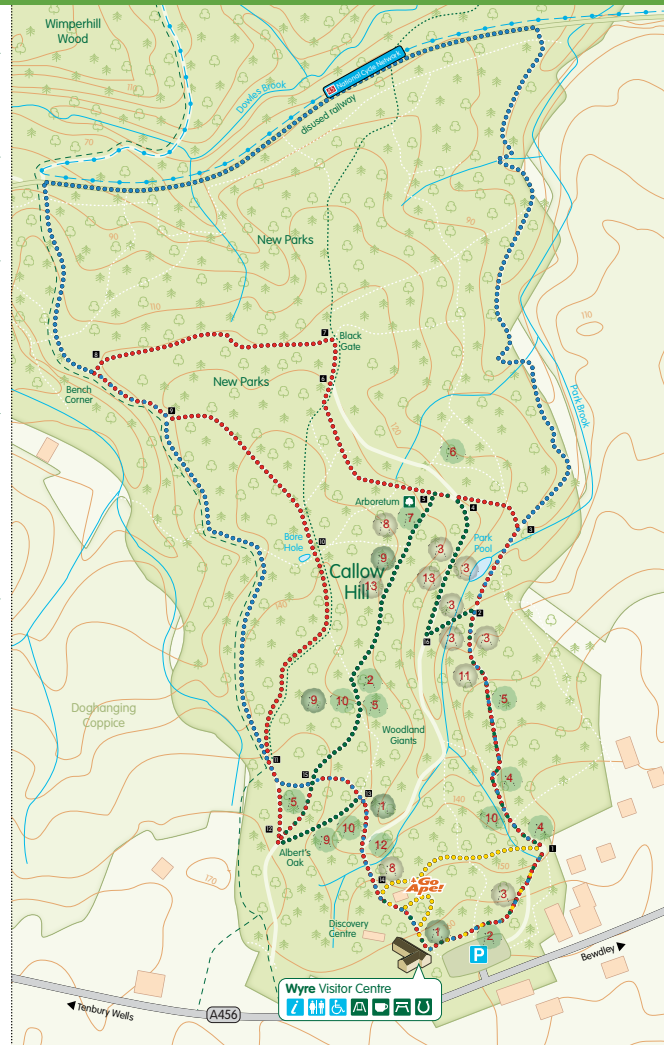


## Wyre Forest Callow Hill area

### Key

- Parking
  - Information
  - Toilets
  - All access
  - Cafe
  - Play area
  - Picnic area
  - Horse riding
  - Buzzard Trail
  - Woodpecker Trail
  - Wren Trail
  - Family Mountain Bike Trail
  - National Cycle Route
  - Public footpaths
  - Public bridleways
  - Emergency numbered posts
- 0 100 200m



### Key to trees

- 1 European Larch
- 2 Holly
- 3 Douglas Fir
- 4 Oak
- 5 Silver Birch
- 6 Wild Service
- 7 True Service (Whitty Pear)
- 8 Ash
- 9 Scots Pine
- 10 Corsican Pine
- 11 Alder Buckthorn
- 12 Hazel
- 13 Hawthorn

NB: Some numbers relate to individual trees and some to plantations of a single species.

As you learn the trees see if you can spot them at other locations around the route. (Eg silver birch is very common just about everywhere!)

You will also come across different tree species on this route - look at their leaves, buds and bark and see if you can identify what they are by using a book or the internet.



# Ash

Use this map to find an example of this tree when you next visit Wyre.

Alternatively, to print a bigger version click [here](#).



## Ash - Fraxinus excelsior

### Folklore

#### What's in a name?

Through history the Ash has played a key role. Pre Christianity, Scandinavians worshipped the Ash, which was thought to have medicinal and mystical properties and the wood was burnt to ward off evil spirits. This could be why it was referred to as the "Tree of Life" in Norse Viking mythology.

In Britain, to the end of the 18th century, Ash was regarded as a healing tree. A young Ash was split, held open by the wedges while a child with broken or weak limbs passed through the gap naked. The split was then plastered and swathed up. If the tree healed the child would too, but if a gap remained the child would not be cured.



Part of the Olive family, the Ash is a native broadleaf and fairly abundant tree. When fully grown it is a tall and graceful tree with a light domed canopy. It often grows with other Ash trees but tends to grow smaller and thinner in these conditions. The Ash has characteristic delicate "leaflets" rather than single leaves.



Size  
30 - 45m tall.



Age  
Up to 400 years old.

[www.foresteducation.org/  
search/learning.results/](http://www.foresteducation.org/search/learning.results/)



## Ash - identification

Ashes have aerodynamic 'keys' as do maples, but unlike maples they are symmetrical and not paired. Twigs have characteristic black buds set on opposite sides.



### ★ Flowers and seed

Can be male, female or both. Male and female flowers are found on different individual trees. Purple catkin female flowers ripen and grow into seeds called "keys", so called because they look like old fashioned keys. They spin in the wind so are also called "spinners".



### ★ Leaves

These are not single leaves but are compound and made up of several "leaflets". They are lance shaped with slightly toothed edges and are arranged in pairs with an odd one at the end.

### ★ Bark

The bark is smooth and grey with fissures that appear as it grows older. The colour of the bark is thought to give the tree its name.







## Ash - identification (cont.)



★ Winter buds



★ Male buds

★ Female flowers



## Ash - associated fungi and lichens

In Britain, Ash trees can suffer from a variety of root and butt rots that can delay the tree coming into leaf, leading to eventual death. Ash can also suffer from a condition called Ash Dieback, resulting in dead twigs and branches found scattered on the ground below.

★ *Daldinia concentrica*  
A common saprophyte occasionally found on fallen branches of Ash.





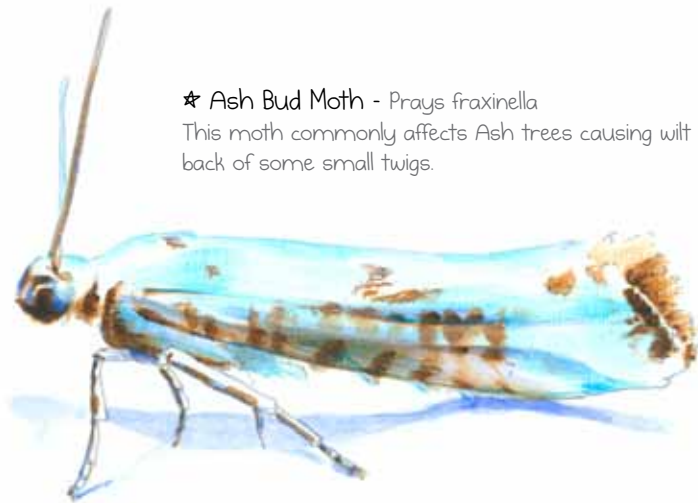
## Ash - associated wildlife (insects)

The Ash has high conservation value. The airy canopy and short leaf stay allow a lot of sunlight through to the woodland floor and hence a rich and varied ground flora can grow, such as wild garlic, dogs mercury and bluebells.

This also means there is plenty of food to allow a wide variety of insects and birds to thrive.

### Wildlife Spotter

To download an insect spotter chart click [here](#)



#### ★ Ash Bud Moth - *Prays fraxinella*

This moth commonly affects Ash trees causing wilt and die-back of some small twigs.



## Ash - associated wildlife (birds and mammals)

Birds such as bullfinches enjoy the seeds and woodcocks, woodpeckers, redstarts and nuthatches can find plenty of good nesting sites. In mixed Ash woodlands you may even see a dormouse!

### Wildlife Spotter

To download a bird spotter chart click [here](#)



#### ★ Great-spotted Woodpecker nesting



#### ★ Bullfinches They feed on the seeds.

#### ★ Dormouse



#### ★ Nuthatch nesting



## Ash - timber properties

Light in colour, with conspicuous growth rings and straight grain, Ash wood is best between the ages of 30 and 60 years old.

Ash dries readily, and is very strong. It saws and machines easily, taking a good finish and responds well to steam-bending. Ash is unsuitable for use out of doors unless treated as it is perishable.

It is so strong and elastic when taken from young trees that it is claimed it will bear a greater strain than any other European timber of equal thickness.

It is the only British native tree that has never been replaced by an imported substitute.

People have used the hardwood timber of Ash for many years. Its timber is one of the toughest and a natural shock absorber. The wood can take a hard blow without splintering and so is used where strength and flexibility are needed.



## Ash - uses past and present



Before the reign of iron and steel, Ash timber was in demand for many uses where metal has now supplanted it.



Used for tool handles and sports equipment - great for oars, axes, spades, hockey sticks and hammershafts, ladder rungs and other similar products.



Can be steam bent and is used in furniture, wheel rims and boat building, walking sticks, gates and other house interior uses.



Flexibility and strength make it great for vehicle frames - such as Morgan cars (made in Malvern).



Old uses include skis, tent pegs, horse drawn coach and cart building and agricultural implements.



The leaves are sometimes used as fodder for cattle and horses though it is said to have a detrimental effect on the butter made from the cows' milk.



Ash can also be grown as "coppice" (the trunk is cut which encourages numerous stems to grow from the stump) This gives smaller diameter wood which can be cut regularly and was very good for firewood and charcoal in the past. This type of management for trees is growing popular again.