

# Trees



**The Cambridge Oak,  
*Quercus x warburgii*  
Planted between 1873  
and 1875**

**In 2005 was 16.7m tall  
with a crown spread of  
19.5m**

**No: 10005347\*A**

## Questions *(to encourage big thinking)*

- How could you use different senses to explore a tree?
- What changes do you think it's witnessed during its lifetime?
- Can you spot any shapes, patterns or faces in the bark? How could you record what the bark is like?
- What measurements could you record?
- What different habitats does a tree provide?
- What wildlife does it support?
- What benefits do we get from trees? Why are they important?
- How could you record what you find out about your tree?  
What different methods could you use?
- How do trees make you feel?

## Activity Ideas

- Find your own tree near you to explore through the seasons. What could you investigate?
- How does your tree change through the seasons? You could explore what wildlife it supports, imagine what it may have seen during its lifetime or create a poem, song or artwork about your tree. You could find out about the different parts of a tree, including the parts you can't see.

## Further Information

Oaks are one of the most iconic of British trees and can live to be hundreds of years old. The UK has two native oak species, the Sessile Oak (*Quercus petraea*) and the English Oak (*Quercus robur*). Oak trees hold a special place in our culture, history, and hearts. The English Oak supports more life than any other native tree species in the UK, even its fallen leaves support biodiversity.

The Cambridge Oak is a magnificent tree growing at Cambridge University Botanic Garden. Its exact origin and planting is unknown and it has been named and renamed as botanists disagreed over its parentage. It is most widely thought to be a hybrid of *Quercus rugosa*, an evergreen oak species from USA, Mexico and Central America, and the British native oak *Quercus robur*. In 2005 it was measured at 16.7 m tall with a crown spread of 19.5m. Planted at the Garden sometime between 1873 and 1875, it is between 146 and 148 years old. It has been left to age gracefully providing a number of different habitats which support a wide range of wildlife.

As well as supporting wildlife, trees have lots of benefits for humans. They provide us with food, timber and medicines, play a role in flood and temperature control, produce oxygen, store carbon, clean the air of pollutants, clean water and of course - make us feel good!

## Links to Other Resources

- [Resources: exploring trees - Cambridge Botanic Garden](#)
- [Exploring the Cambridge Oak - Cambridge Botanic Garden](#)
- [Activity finder - Woodland Trust \(treetoolsforschools.org.uk\)](#)
- [Tree ID for Kids - Nature Detectives - Woodland Trust](#)
- [Urban forest activity booklet \(cambridge.gov.uk\)](#)
- [How trees secretly talk to each other - BBC News - YouTube](#)
- [Tree measuring - OWL Scotland](#)
- [Resources for schools - Cambridge University Botanic Garden](#)