



Long Route/**Red Route**

The aim of this guide is to take you round the Arboretum pointing out trees and shrubs of particular interest. Many areas of the Arboretum are under planted with spring bulbs, notably snowdrops, bluebells and daffodils. Please take care not to step on them as they emerge.

The first part is the same for both routes, marked with red and yellow posts (e.g. RY post 1). The Long route/ Red route takes between 1 hour and 1 hour 30 minutes to complete. The Short route/Yellow route takes between 45 minutes to one hour.

From the entrance **RY post 1** walk straight ahead. You will see on your left one of the Arboretum's many interesting trees – the large, spreading Ostrya carpinifolia (Hop Hornbeam). This produces green catkins in spring followed by creamy brown hop-like flowers: hence its name. Look at its label which shows the Latin name, the common name and the family to which it belongs. You will find labels on nearly all the specimen trees. These will help you learn about which trees grow well here, and may be suitable for your garden, and they will help you learn the names of trees and shrubs.

Continue forward to **RY post 2** at the large, cone shaped Fastigate Oak (Quercus robur fastigiata). It is intriguing to think that this tree has been bred from our English Oak to have this ornamental shape.

From **RY post 2** go left through the pines, taking the left fork, to reach **RY post 3**. This brings you to the Glebe Lawn where you can also find the Snake Bark Maple (Acer rufinerve) and next to it a large Mahonia japonica, an evergreen shrub which produces clusters of scented yellow flowers in winter, and a fine specimen of Cornus kousa. In the spring this has pink-white bracts followed in autumn by inedible strawberry-like fruits. To the right of RY Post 3 is a large birch (Betula populifolia) with white or silvery bark. This is one of the few remaining trees planted by the Glebe Lawn to commemorate the silver wedding anniversary of Sir Bernard and Lady Lovell. Additional planting to replace those lost will be carried out by our volunteers over the next couple of years.

Walk across the lawn to **RY post 4** then turn right into Knight's Avenue (Named to commemorate Sir Bernard's Knighthood in 1961). Pass the lake and seat at **RY post 5**. Please note that the lake needs relining and does not look at its best and is due for restoration. From here you can see Reith Avenue, planted with Red Twigged Limes (Tilia platyphyllos rubra) on your left, stretching down the far side of the lake. This was planted to celebrate the Reith Lectures that Sir Bernard gave for the BBC in 1958. At the far side of the lake you can see the Swamp Cypress (Taxodium distichum), a deciduous conifer. Also in the woods, to the left of Reith Avenue, you can find the Oriental Plane (Platanus orientalis). In our Arboretum this is known as the Hippocratic Tree and there is a notice by it explaining its history and why it is given this name.

Continue down Knight's Avenue on the right-hand side of the lake to the end. Look left to see two magnificent Veteran Oaks. Over 300 years old, these are an important host for saproxylic invertebrates which are dependent on dead or decaying wood at some stage of their life cycle.

Carry on to **RY post 6** where there is a large leaved Dogwood (Cornus walteri). Here the Red route continues, departing from the Yellow route.

Leaving the first part where the routes are combined, continue the Red route by following posts marked red (e.g. **R post 7**), and go left. Passing a group of mature Robinia pseudoacacia (False Acacia or Black Locust) on your right. Go on to **R post 7**. This is next to a large Acer monspessulanum (Montpelier Maple) which is native to Southern Europe to West Asia. To the left,

under the canopy of the silver birches, is a large swathe of snowdrops (*Galanthus nivalis*) whose display starts at the end of January, into February and sometimes March. Some dead hedges have recently been created from unwanted branches to protect the emerging flowers. These are wildlife friendly and an environmentally better alternative to burning.

Continue ahead, taking the left fork towards **R post 8**, going slightly downhill past the Hebe Collection which is maintained by the Hebe Society. Hebes are from New Zealand. Continue past the *Acer macrophyllum* (Oregon Maple) and *Liriodendron tulipifera* (Tulip tree) on the left and *Euonymus phellomanus* with its unusual, winged branches and Acer Autumn Glory on the right, to reach **R post 9** by a group of four *Calocedrus decurrens* (Incense Cedar). To its right is a mature *Prunus* sp 'Tai haku' (Great White Cherry) which has beautiful blossom in spring.

Swing right across the slope past **R post 10** to a *Sequoia sempervirens adpressa* (a dwarf selection of the giant coast redwood). Trees to the left of the path with ornamental flaking bark are a mature *Eucalyptus perriniana* and young *Betula albo sinensis*. Just before **R Post 11** there are some fine specimens of *Parrotia persica* (Persian Ironwood) which are closely related to the Witch Hazel (*Hamamelis*) and have crimson flowers borne on bare twigs in late winter/ early spring and attractively coloured foliage in autumn. Continue to approach **R post 11** by the *Quercus palustris* (Pin Oak) on Golden Avenue. The Arboretum holds a National Collection of oak species. Go left downhill, past several more oaks on the left to **R post 12** by the viewpoint across the Dane Valley. This area of the Dane Valley is designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest by Natural England.

From the viewpoint go right, along the edge of the Arboretum passing a line of *Larix marschlinisii* (Hybrid Larch), a deciduous conifer, on the right until you reach **R post 13**. Continue past the gate to Cheshire Wildlife Trust's Nature Reserve to **R post 14** at the edge of the area known as Wheatfield South (a name which reflects its use before it became an Arboretum).

Bear diagonally uphill passing a group of different *Salix* species (willows) to reach **R post 15**. Continue on, passing on your left a group of *Fagus sylvatica* Dawyck (various forms of Dawyck Beech which are fastigate just like the oak you saw at the beginning of the trail at RY post 2.) You will pass through a group of *Malus* species (crab apples) and to the right, an avenue dedicated to *Malus*, which provide a colourful display of blossom in spring and fruits in autumn, to reach **R post 16** at the Great Avenue, the planting of which was completed by local school children in 1996 and extends to over half a mile. Go into this avenue which comprises native tree species and follow it eastwards in the direction of the entrance/exit.

At **R post 17** you can see to the right the main collection of *Pinus* species (pine). Continue to **R post 18**. Here to your right, in Barnfield South, is the Arboretum's third National Collection, that of *Fraxinus* (ash). Unfortunately, here you will see the symptoms of ash dieback disease which has been sweeping across the United Kingdom.

Continue up the Great Avenue to **R post 19**. In the fields on both sides are most of the coniferous trees which are part of the Royal Botanic Gardens of Edinburgh's collection of endangered conifers in its International Conifer Conservation Programme. The Arboretum duplicates part of the collection held in Edinburgh in order to protect the trees by hosting them in different sites.

Go to the end of the Great Avenue to **R post 20**. Here is one of Cheshire's rarest native trees, *Populus nigra* (Black Poplar). Bear right to **R post 21** which is near *Quercus macranthera* (Persian Oak) and a *Quercus dentata* (Daimyo Oak) and on to the entrance/ exit.

Kindly return this guide to its box by the noticeboard at the entrance.

Thank you for visiting.

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