

Bird Cherry - *prunus padus*



The best time to spot Bird Cherry is in late spring (early May) when the tree is in blossom.

Bird Cherry (below April 2011) differs from the Wild Cherry or Gean in that the flowers are not borne in clusters (umbels) but in elongated spikes (racemes). These are erect when they first open but droop after fertilisation encouraging bees to visit the more showy unfertilised blossoms.



Bird Cherry is widely distributed in Selsdon Wood with most on the eastern side along The Wend and Addington Border. That shown in the above photograph (April 2011) is inside the deer-fenced section at the junction of Beech Grove and Langford's Way and the tall one (right 26/4/12) in the newly coppiced area beside The Wend.

Throughout the wood the trees are mainly young, 3-6 meters in height, showing in the understory rather than the canopy. They stand out even before they come into flower as the fresh green foliage appears before many of the other trees come into leaf. The leaves are oval, finely toothed and larger than those of the Wild Cherry. The fruits are very small and black with a wrinkled stone.



Take a spring walk along The Wend and Addington Grove and look out for the fresh green leaves of the Bird Cherry and its spikes of white blossom.

Friends of Selsdon Wood

Working to improve our wood

