



## Field Maple - *acer campestre*



The best times to spot Field Maple are in the summer or autumn when the leaf can be readily identified and the tree bears its distinctive keys.

The Field Maple is a small, native tree that occurs throughout Selsdon Wood. A notable specimen can be seen bearing the Langford's Way sign close to the junction with Addington Border (below 8/4/12). Others can be found throughout the wood and along several of the field borders.

The bark and buds are brown with the bark rough and deeply fissured and the buds small and stubby and in pairs exactly opposite each other.



The flowers are in small, green clusters and open at the same time as the leaves in late April or early May (below left 23/4/12). When fully open, the leaves are similar in shape to those of the Sycamore (a close relative) but much smaller and more deeply cut (below right 17/5/12 - shows Field Maple leaf on top of Sycamore leaf). They have five lobes and are always borne in pairs like the buds.



The fruit are keys formed from two seeds each with a wing with their bases joined together. The two wings of the key form a virtually straight line (below 11/6/12), unlike the key of the Sycamore, which is scimitar shaped.



Take a walk in Selsdon Wood in the summer time and look for the distinctive lobed leaves. In the autumn spot the keys and compare them with those of the Sycamore. Beside the path from Vale Meadow to the Great Field there is a Sycamore and a Field Maple for easy comparison.

