



Sycamore - *acer pseudoplatanus*



The best time to spot the Sycamore is in spring when it comes into leaf before most of the canopy trees. The distinctive leaf is easy to identify throughout the summer.

Sycamore is found throughout Selsdon Wood although with fewer trees in the northern section. There are many young trees in Hillocks Wood (right 14/4/12) and Greenhill Shaw and it is these that are most noticeable when the fresh new leaves appear in April.



The pink buds are easy to recognise and the leaf is large and very distinctive in shape with five toothed lobes and a pink stem. The black patches frequently seen on the leaves later in the year are caused by a fungus - *rhytisma acerinum*.

The flowers form a green hanging raceme (below 21/5/13). The fruit are scimitar-shaped, two-winged keys (see insert above 29/6/12).

Sycamore is not a native tree but was introduced from the Continent in the fifteenth century and is now widely distributed throughout Britain.



The Sycamore grows quickly and can reach full height of 20-30m in around 50 years. It is nowhere near as long lived as the native Oak or Ash seldom exceeding 150 years. Only trees over 20 years of age produce flowers and keys so they will not be found on the most of the saplings in Hillocks Wood.

A few Norway Maple can also be found in the same section of the wood. This is a close relative of the Sycamore which can be distinguished by its more pointed leaves and straighter keys (see left).



Take a spring walk around the red trail, noting the young Sycamore trees in Hillocks Wood. Return in the summer and autumn and look for Sycamore keys. Can you find a Norway Maple?

Sycamore is widely distributed throughout Selsdon Wood.
The map shows some notable examples.

