



Children's
Tree Trail

**MILL
MARSH
PARK**

WELCOME TO THE PARK!

As you pass the notice board, look ahead, and see a line of young trees on each side of the path. They are all the same type of tree called Norway maples. **1**



The hand-shaped leaves are a favourite with caterpillars.

Ever had maple syrup on your pancakes? Well, that comes from the sap of maples. Challenge your friends or family to a slalom race, first to the end, Ready... **Steady... Go!**



Don't get distracted by the play park, on your right-hand side of the path, look for the magnificent large leaved lime. **2**

Look at its size...can you believe there is as much of the tree below the ground as above? All those roots, searching for food and water and acting as a giant anchor against the winds. These towering trees are often covered in sticky sap from the insects they attract. Look closely for any clues of the wonderful range of wildlife these trees support.

Nestling next to the river side can you spot the unusual locust tree. **3**

This is a very tough, spikey tree, and likes to spend more of the year bare, than clothed in leaves. Their straight trunks were used for ship masts as they are so resistant to rot. Imagine these trunks standing tall and proud against the wild salt-laden sea winds. The spring flowers, hang like bunches of grapes and have a sweet orange fragrance - Who would have thought that so many parts of this mysterious tree are highly poisonous to animals and humans?



Behind the park, behold the mighty Turkey oak. **4**



There are many wonderful oaks in this park, can you spot the 'King of the Woodland', the common oak? **5**

Compare leaves from these family members, what is the same?



All oaks produce acorns protected in what some believe are fairy cups or elven hats.

How did this noble tree fit into this tiny seed? I wonder... I wonder...



Follow the path but keep your eyes peeled for the distinctive, beautiful, white barked trio of silver birch. **6**

This bark sheds over the years like tissue paper. Lie underneath and look up at the leaves. They are so light and feathery to allow plants like bluebells and violets to grow underneath. Woodpeckers love to make nests in their trunks - Are there any signs of hidden holes where they might be resting?

Standing alone in its magnificent glory is the Bhutan pine. **7**

It has such long soft needles that look like silk tassels, are they as soft as they look? This trees' native home is 1000's of miles away in the snowy mountain valleys of China & India. Sometimes called the blue pine, it produces a sticky resin - Ever had the chest rub 'Vicks' when you've been blocked up? Well, this comes from the oil from such trees. Can you think of any other plants we use as medicines?



Now look for some of the tallest, thinnest trees in the park, silver backed leaves fluttering in the breeze. This is the lombardy poplar reaching **8** for the skies.

How does it manage to stay so upright when it is so tall? Imagine being a bird sitting right on the highest branches...what would the views be like? What would we look like?

Talking of large trees, go round the skatepark and try to spot the tallest of all living trees. Some of the coast redwood can reach 1500 years old! **9**



This one has a long way to go but its making a good base. Guess how old it is? Measure all the way round its trunk in cm and divide by 2.5 to estimate it's age in years.



Now cut across the playing field in the direction of the 'Queen of the Woods' - the magical beech. **10**

Like the oak, this supports hundreds of different types of wildlife - bugs to birds, squirrels to butterflies. Sit below with your back against the trunk, and bath in the lovely warm green light as the sun filters through the leaves. Listen to any noises the tree is making.

Heading for home, don't miss the majestic horse chestnut. **11**

In the summertime, look at the 'candles' of flower spires. If you are here in the Autumn, collect some conkers. You can make necklaces, bracelets or fairy toadstools from them. Try to find the desirable 'singles' rather than the 'lopsided doubles' in a case. Make 'fishbones' from any fallen leaves by carefully removing the 'flesh' from the 'bones'. People say to leave conkers round the house to deter spiders, but who would want to do that?



The final piece in the trail is You! 12



We must remember, how much trees do for us, how much we need them and what magnificent intelligent beings they are in their 'tree-like' way. Take time to enjoy them, celebrate them and when you look closely, even closer, maybe they can teach us a thing or two. What can you learn from trees?

Map of Mill Marsh Park



For more information about the park, please email
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