Autumn trees at Queenswood

The theme of this trail is to lead you through the arboretum and draw you to a number of trees with particularly fine early autumn colour and introduce you to some of the berry bearing trees, so long as the birds haven’t got there first.

The trail begins with varieties of young Japanese Maples, then on to a range of berry bearing Rowans, exotic Oaks, American Maples, and, finally, Maples from the Caucasus and Asia.

Depending on when you are completing your walk some of the trees may not yet be in good autumn colour, while others may have already passed. This is the nature of the trees and will vary according to species and the season.

Why do the leaves change colour in autumn?

The green colour of leaves is produced by chlorophyll. This pigment is used by plants in the process called photosynthesis to create food (in the form of sugar) from water, carbon dioxide and sunlight.

Leaves also contain orange and yellow pigments (xanthophylls and carotenoids), but these are usually hidden by the large amount of green chlorophyll during spring and summer.

As autumn approaches, and the days get shorter and colder, the tree prepares to lose its leaves, gradually sealing them off. Without a supply of water and minerals, chlorophyll cannot be replenished, and so the green colouration starts to fade, revealing the orange and yellow pigments.

If deposits of sugar get left in the leaf when it is sealed off by the plant, as happens to many trees in the Maple family, the leaves will appear bright red or purple. This is caused by a group of pigments called anthocyanins.

The sunnier the weather during autumn, the more anthocyanins are produced and the more brilliant the resulting colour display.

The best displays of autumn colour are produced in years when autumn is bright and cool, with chilly but not freezing nights.

Queenswood Guide to the Park

If you would like to obtain a copy of the full map of Queenswood Country Park along with more information about some of the trees and features, please purchase a leaflet available from the National Trust shop priced £1.

Walks and family fun at Queenswood

To find out more about guided walks looking at the trees and wildlife of Queenswood and other family activities taking place at the country park please pick up a copy of the Queenswood Walks and Family Fun leaflet available from the National Trust shop.

Queenswood Country Park and Arboretum

Queenswood Country Park and Arboretum is managed by the Herefordshire Council Parks, Countryside & Leisure Development Service in partnership with the Queenswood Coronation Fund.

Queenswood Country Park, Dinmore Hill, Leominster HR6 0PY
Tel: 01432 600 073 Fax: 01432 260 526 email: queenswood@herefordshire.gov.uk

www.herefordshire.gov.uk/queenswood

Queenswood Coronation Fund Registered Charity No. 518624

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Early Autumn Tree Trail

B341 Mountain Maple
Acer spicatum
This maple is not from Japan but Eastern North America, spreading widely across the far north and America. The tree grows as understory beneath canopy trees in moist woods on rocky hillsides and along streams.

B494 Coral Bark Maple
Acer palmatum 'Sango kaku'
Although noted for its coral coloured bark this particular example provides a brilliant flash of bright golden yellow foliage through the trees when viewed from Lime Avenue.

B158 Downy Japanese Maple
Acer japonicum 'Vitifolium'
This mature Japanese maple is an early turner, the large vine leaf like leaves turning from gold to crimson in early autumn.

A433 Chinese Rowan
Sorbus esserteana flava
This is a clone of the Esserteau’s Rowan, which has yellow berries.

A303 Chinese Rowan
Sorbus esserteana
This Chinese Rowan, also known as Esserteau’s Rowan, produces masses of deep red berries.

A302 Rowan Winter Cheer
Sorbus Winter Cheer
Autumn colour is not just about leaves, berries too have a range of rich autumnal hues. Here the first of our berry colours is the orange of the Rowan Winter Cheer which as its name suggests lasts well into winter to brighten the dark days.

A675 Japanese Maple ‘Bloodgood’
Acer palmatum ‘Bloodgood’
This cage has two red-leaved Japanese Maples of the Bloodgood variety with more Coral Bark Maples nearby.

Compartments H Birch varieties
Belula
This area of the arboretum has many varieties of Birch tree from the around the world, including China, Japan, the Himalaya and America. Birches are known for their white bark, often flaking, and delicate triangular leaves which turn golden yellow in autumn.

Oak Avenue
Oak Avenue contains a wide variety of Oaks from around the world, you will find these at various stages of colouration depending on their variety and when you visit.

G366 Scarlet Oak
Quercus coccinea
Either side of the beginning of the avenue, perhaps the brightest of the Oaks, from Central and Eastern North America the leaves turning bright scarlet in autumn.

F261 Chinese Spindle
Euonymus lanceolatus
This spindle, native to central and western China, produces masses of striking pink (poisonous) berries.

F490 Sugar Maple
Acer saccharum
We return to maples, this one from North America and Canada. This is the leaf on the Canadian flag and the tree most often tapped for its sap to make Maple Syrup.

K317 Red Maple
Acer rubrum ‘Schlesingen’
To your right a little way off Queens Ride are two Red Maples of a variety known for its early deep rich scarlet autumn colour.

E286/287 Cappadocian Maples
Acer cappadocicum
A group of maples native to the Caucasus and Western Asia. There are a number of varieties here; the Aureum’s leaves turn golden yellow in the autumn whereas the Rubrum has pinkish margins to its leaves.

B107 Japanese Rowan
Sorbus commixta
This tree’s leaves have good later autumn colour but early in the season it will produce huge quantities of bright red berries.

Large Group
This cage contains the first of our Japanese Maples. There are hundreds of varieties of Japanese Maples, having been bred and crossed to create dazzling coloured leaves or bark or exotic leaf shapes.

A722, 723, 724 Coral Bark Maples
Acer palmatum ‘Sango kaku’
The brilliant coral colour of the bark is the outstanding feature of this maple and gives it its name which means ‘coral tower’. Leaves are green with a reddish margin which turn to an overall golden yellow colour in autumn. The younger the tree the brighter the colouration.

A681 Japanese Maple ‘Suminagashi’
Acer palmatum ‘Suminagashi’
A distinctive bright purple leaved variety turning crimson in the autumn.

A719 Japanese Maple ‘Tamuke yama’
Acer palmatum ‘Tamuke yama’
Another red leaved Japanese Maple, new leaves changing from deep crimson to very dark purple red and finally bright crimson in autumn. The leaves are also very deeply dissected.