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 autumn colour.

The trial begins with varieties of young Japanese Maples, then onto more mature examples. Exotic Oaks lead on to more natural woodlands which give a contrast with the exotic specimen trees.

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

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.

Japanese Maple 
Acer palmatum

Shagbark Hickory 
Carya ovata

Japanese Rowan 
Sorbus commixta

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.
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Late Autumn Tree Trail

C200
Japanese Maples
Acer palmatum
As you pass through the Autumn Garden you will see many varieties of mature Japanese maples. These maples were planted in the 1960s as part of the original planting scheme under the guidance of Sir Richard Cotterell then the Chairman of Queenswood Coronation Fund. Sir Richard was the driving force behind establishing the arboretum and it's to his love and knowledge of trees that we owe the presence and appearance of the mature trees in the Arboretum today. The maples are of a number of different varieties for which records have not survived.

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 are visiting.

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

F447
Japanese Rowan
Sorbus commixta
Also known as Japanese Mountain Ash, giving deep red autumn colours in both the leaves and berries.

F69
Japanese Maples
Acer palmatum
You will pass another small collection of mature Japanese Maples.

Native woodland
Quercus petraea, Fraxinus excelsior, Corylus avellana
This area of more natural wood gives contrast between the more managed areas (where we mow the areas around the individual specimen trees each year). Here Ash and hazel are growing up as an understory to the canopy Oak trees. This area is probably how Queenswood would appear if we were to let it develop without any intervention.

Redwood Grove
Sequoia sempervirens, Sequoiadendron giganteum
Not known for their autumn colour! (they are conifers and will retain their green leaves (needles) throughout the winter). They do however have reddish trunks and when the low Autumnal sun catches them, they glow spectacularly red. These are found on the West coast of North America and grow to be the tallest and biggest trees in the world.

B5
Sargeants Rowan
Sorbus sargentiana
From Western China. The leaves are the largest of any rowan turning deep red late in autumn. Produces small bright red berries in large numbers, which are a popular food source for birds such as Thrushes and Blackbirds.

B203
Vine Maple
Acer circinatum
Not known for their autumn colour! (they are conifers and will retain their green leaves (needles) throughout the winter). They do however have reddish trunks and when the low Autumnal sun catches them, they glow spectacularly red. These are found on the West coast of North America, ranging widely across the far north and spreading south along mountain ranges. The tree grows as understory beneath canopy trees in moist woods on rocky hillsides and along streams.

C203
Mountain Maple
Acer spicatum
This maple is not from Japan but Eastern North America, ranging widely across the far north and spreading south along mountain ranges. The tree grows as understory beneath canopy trees in moist woods on rocky hillsides and along streams.

B341
Japanese Maple
Acer palmatum
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B405
Shagbark Hickory
Carya ovata
When in full colour you can’t miss this Hickory from North America, where it is the most important nut producing species (although rarely produces fruit in the UK). Its timber is also valuable being close grained, very hard, strong and flexible, used for tool handles, athletic goods and interior finishing.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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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.

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