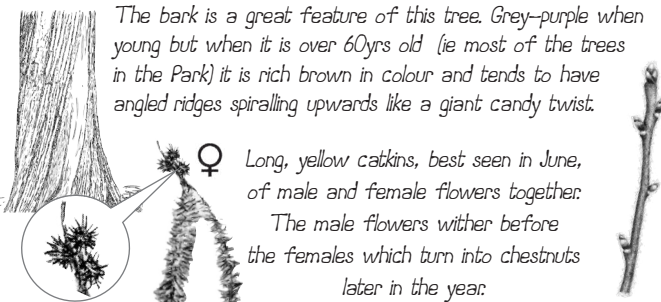


What Does It Look Like?

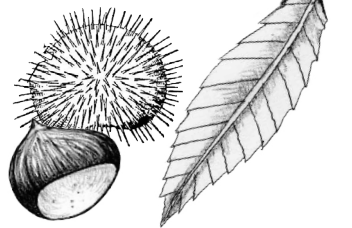
Belonging to the same family as oaks and beeches, sweet chestnut is a deciduous* (*dee-sid-you-us*) tree which can live for over 400yrs. It can grow up to 35m high and with a trunk of up to 3m in diameter.



Did you know...?
the male flowers
smell of frying
mushrooms?

♂

The leaves are long and pointy - longer than those of any other wild tree - with a serrated or toothed edge.

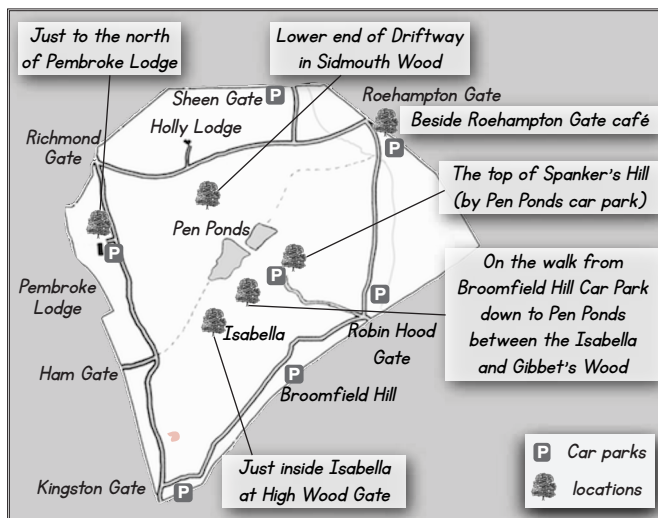


The trees begin to bear fruit when they are around 25 yrs old. After pollination by insects, the female flowers develop into shiny, red-brown fruits wrapped in a green, prickly, spiny case.

* Loses its leaves in winter.

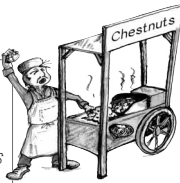
Where to Find Sweet Chestnut in the Park

There are good examples all over the Park. Here are a few.



Tree of the Month June

Hey Mister...
You're too early.
Roast chestnuts
is near Christmas
Not summer!



Sweet Chestnut



This beautiful and majestic tree is not a native. It was imported from southern Europe, western Asia and North Africa, but looks perfectly at home in British parkland.

The presence of a chestnut tree is often the result of human activity rather than an act of nature.

In the 18th-19th centuries it was popular as a landscaping tree and today it is often seen in parks where you can find the oldest and largest specimens.

Just like here in Richmond Park !



10 - 35 m



FRIENDS of RICHMOND PARK

The Tree of the Month is produced by the Friends of Richmond Park
Written and designed by Ken Edwards
Charity number 1133201

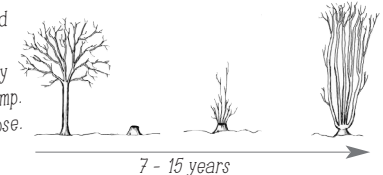
Great for Wildlife

The nuts make a gourmet feast for many animals including birds, mice and squirrels. Deer love chestnuts too - which is why so many were originally planted in the Park so that King Charles I and his pals would have lots of strong, healthy animals to hunt.

Uses of Sweet Chestnut

Sweet chestnut timber is similar to oak - strong and tough but slightly easier to work. In southeast England, sweet chestnut is coppiced* to produce poles used in farming and parks & gardens.

* Coppicing is a traditional method of woodland management. The tree is cut down periodically and new shoots grow from its stump. A coppiced wood is called a copse.



Roasted sweet chestnuts are tasty and nutritious, but most are imported as the British climate is too cold for them to ripen properly. Never eat a raw chestnut - it's not good for your stomach.

True or False?

For a long time, it has been thought that the sweet chestnut tree was introduced into Britain by the Romans. However, recent research shows that there is no evidence of it being grown here during the Roman period between AD43 - 410. The earliest written record was found to be from the 12th century.



What do you think ?

'That old chestnut'

This saying refers to a story or joke that has been repeated so often that everyone is bored with it ... 'Oh no. Not that old chestnut again!'