

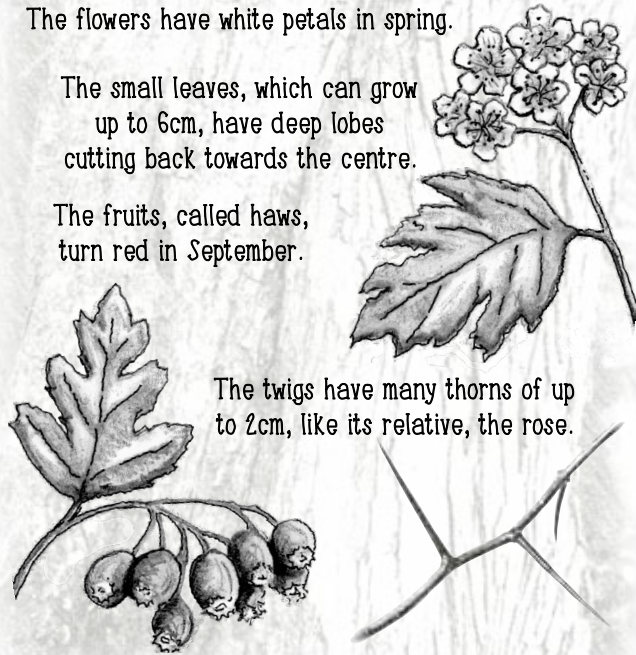
what does it look like?

The flowers have white petals in spring.

The small leaves, which can grow up to 6cm, have deep lobes cutting back towards the centre.

The fruits, called haws, turn red in September.

The twigs have many thorns of up to 2cm, like its relative, the rose.



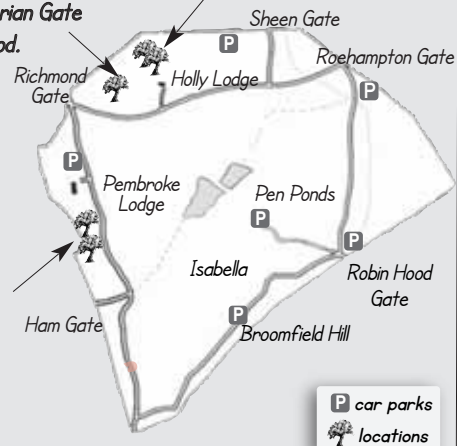
where to find hawthorn in the Park

Hawthorn grows all over the Park and is the second most common veteran tree in the Park after English oak.

One of the best places to see hawthorn is 'hawthorn valley' on the Cambrian Gate side of Conduit Wood.

On the other side of Conduit Wood is a newly-fenced hawthorn enclosure.

You can see some of the oldest in the Petersham Park area alongside the cycle track near to the golf course.



Tree of the Month September



Hawthorn is a funny little tree, only 5-15m tall when mature, with branches that twist and turn and trunks that can divide into several twisty, gnarly parts.

Often planted along boundaries as hedging, hawthorn is a feature of the English countryside.

The tree grows slowly but can live for up to 400 years.

Hawthorns are also known as quickthorn, thornapple, May-tree and whitethorn.

In the Harry Potter stories, Harry's schoolboy enemy, Draco Malfoy, owned a hawthorn wand.



FRIENDS OF RICHMOND PARK

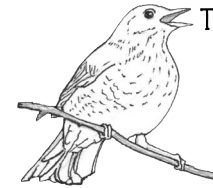
The Tree of the Month is produced by the Friends of Richmond Park

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How hawthorn supports wildlife

Hawthorn is a valuable tree for wildlife. Perhaps most importantly, the caterpillars of many moths, like the lappet, depend on the leaves for food.



The fruits are popular with birds - especially fieldfares, redwings and thrushes (left). - and also with small mammals like voles. Dormice like to eat the flowers. Birds often shelter in a hawthorn hedge.

There are two insects that have hawthorn in their name.

the hawthorn shield bug



the hawthorn moth.



Folklore & history



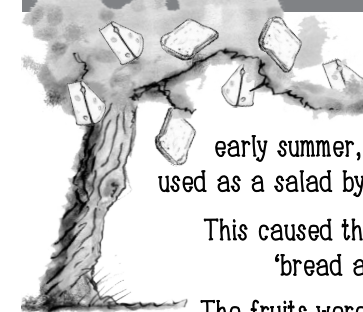
Hawthorn used to be associated with illness and death, perhaps because there is a chemical in the flower which is also found in decaying animals.



Tradition says the hawthorn is a meeting place for the fairies. A lone hawthorn should never be cut down (serious bad luck). Some roads have been diverted because of this.



How we use hawthorn



One of the greatest uses of hawthorn in the past was to provide food in the early summer, when the fresh leaves were used as a salad by workers in the countryside.

This caused the tree to be called the 'bread and cheese' tree.

The fruits were often used to make jellies, wines and sauces. However, eating the fruit raw could produce a nasty stomach ache.

The wood is very close-grained, which it makes it easy to shape when it is cut. It was used to make furniture and tool handles. If there was no immediate use for the wood, it was probably put on the fire as it burns well.