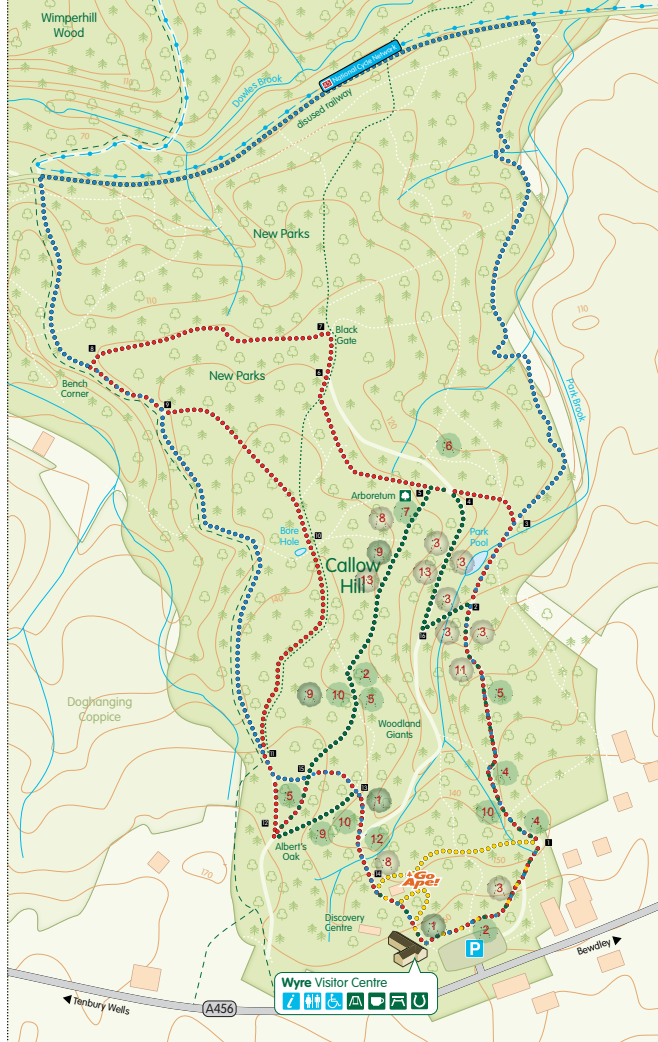


Wyre Forest Callow Hill area

Key

- Parking
- Information
- Toilets
- All access
- Cafe
- Play area
- Picnic area
- Horse riding
- Buzzard Trail
- Woodpecker Trail
- Wren Trail
- Family Mountain Bike Trail
- National Cycle Route
- Public footpaths
- Public bridleways
- Emergency numbered posts

0 100 200m



Key to trees

- 1 European Larch
- 2 Holly
- 3 Douglas Fir
- 4 Oak
- 5 Silver Birch
- 6 Wild Service
- 7 True Service (Whitty Pear)
- 8 Ash
- 9 Scots Pine
- 10 Corsican Pine
- 11 Alder Buckthorn
- 12 Hazel
- 13 Hawthorn

NB: Some numbers relate to individual trees and some to plantations of a single species.

As you learn the trees see if you can spot them at other locations around the route. (Eg silver birch is very common just about everywhere!)

You will also come across different tree species on this route - look at their leaves, buds and bark and see if you can identify what they are by using a book or the internet.



# European Larch

Use this map to find an example of this tree when you next visit Wyre.

Alternatively, to print a bigger version click [here](#).



# European Larch - Larix decidua



## Folklore

### What's in a name?

The larch plays an important role in Lapp and Siberian mythology where it takes the place of the ash as the World-tree. Their shamans use larch wood to rim their ceremonial drums.

### MAGICAL ASPECTS:

The smoke from burning larch is said to ward off evil spirits. Larch may be used for protection and to induce visions.



European and Japanese larch have a limited natural distribution but are, with their hybrid, widely planted. It is unusual amongst softwoods in that it sheds its needles in autumn (ie is deciduous). The Hybrid Larch is a conifer which first grew in Scotland when two different parent trees, the Japanese Larch and the European Larch, were crossed. The resulting hybrid is a natural tree of the mountains with a straight, tapering conical trunk. In Wyre there are European Larch, Japanese Larch and hybrids.



Size  
Up to 45m tall.



Age  
From 100 - 300 years old.

[www.foresteducation.org/search/learning.results/](http://www.foresteducation.org/search/learning.results/)



# European Larch - identification

First classed as a Pine, it differs by being deciduous. An elegant tree with down sweeping branches, turning upwards at the tips.



### ★ Leaves

The limp, bright-green needles are borne in neat tufts, on special short shoots, from late March to October, when they go golden brown.

### ★ Flowers and seed

Male and female cones are often found on the same twig.



### ★ Bark

The bark is grey or brown, breaking into long fissures.





## European Larch - associated fungi and lichens

Certain provenances are highly susceptible to the fungal disease, larch canker (*Lachnellula willkommii*), which causes perennial cankers that girdle or distort branches and stems. There is believed to be an association between frost damage and larch canker, so frosty sites may be particularly at risk. This is not a problem in Wyre.

More recently, larch has been found to be susceptible to the introduced pathogen, *Phytophthora ramorum*, which is causing widespread mortality to Japanese larch in western parts of Britain. Susceptibility of European larch to *P. ramorum* is uncertain at present. European larch can also be affected by *Heterobasidion* (Fomes root and butt rot) as well as another butt rot fungus, *Phaeolus schweinitzii*.



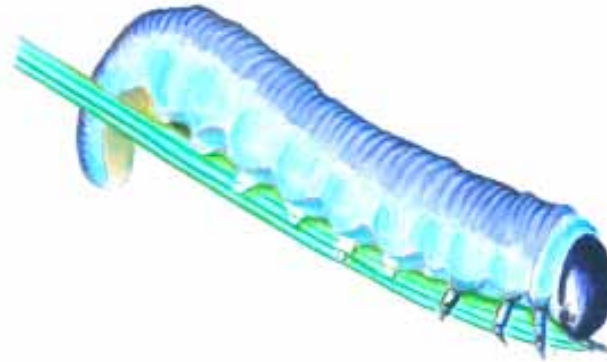
★ *Gomphidius maculatus*



★ Mycorrhizal fungus *Suillus grevillei* (Larch Bolete)



## European Larch - associated wildlife (insects)



★ Larch Sawfly - *Lygaenematus erichsoni*  
The adults are harmless. The caterpillar like larvae eat Larch needles causing galls, and in large numbers, severe defoliation.

### Wildlife Spotter

To download an insect spotter chart [click here](#)



## European Larch - associated wildlife (birds)

A light shade is cast by the Larch providing good cover for larger birds and animals sheltering from the elements.

Birds of prey that nest in Larch include the Sparrowhawk and Goshawk. Seed and bud lovers include the Crossbill and Tree Creeper. Redwings and fieldfares particularly enjoy eating the Larch seeds.

### Wildlife Spotter

To download a bird spotter chart click [here](#)



★ Crossbill  
They enjoy feeding on the seeds.

### ★ Goshawk

Goshawks and Sparrowhawks like big larch and pine trees to nest in.



### ★ Siskin

They enjoy feeding on the seeds.



### ★ Tree Creeper

Look out for these birds creeping up the trunk.



## European Larch - timber properties

Larch has a fairly high timber value. It is moderately resistant to decay/rot, and it can endure constant changes from wet to dry without warping, cracking, shrinking or distorting, and is therefore great for external uses.

The timber is a reddish colour that stains, works and finishes well despite having many small knots. It is resinous and faintly scented.

One of the first trees to be introduced for its timber and became the first conifer to be planted in large scale plantations.



## European Larch - uses past and present



The properties of Larch make it is very useful for outdoor use. Larch is used in construction, for posts, boat building, chipboard, pulp, flooring, fencing and garden furniture. It can be used sawn and in the round



The bark is used for tanning leather and turpentine is a by product.



Old uses - Larch were grown as ornamental and exotic garden trees.