



## Trees

Many of the various types of tree throughout the country park are talked about in tree folklore mostly relating to love, fertility, death and protection from evil. For example witches, ghosts and demons are said to hide amidst the dark leaves of the yew tree.

Other folklore includes:

### Alder

The alder tree was often used by sorcerers. One particular legend tells of how a small boy who climbed up a large tree. He looked down and saw a number of sorcerers at the foot of the tree. Whilst watching, they cut up a dead woman's body and proceeded to throw the pieces high into the air, so high in fact that the boy caught one of the pieces. The pieces fell back down and the sorcerers began to count them but one was missing. Realising this they replaced the piece with wood from the Alder tree, and the woman came back to life. Ever since the tree has been associated with the dead, and their resurrection back to life.

### Ash

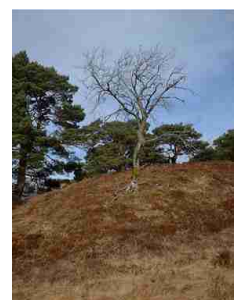
Since ancient times some have believed that the first man was created from the branches and flesh of the Ash tree (and also of the oak)

The seeds of the Ash have long been used in love divination. A Norwegian love story tells of 'Axel Thordsen and Fair Valdborg'. The two were never a couple in life but upon death they were buried close to each other. An Ash tree was planted on each grave. As the trees grew to the same height the branches inclined and became entwined.

Ash can be used in spells requiring focus and strength of purpose, and indicates the linking of the inner and outer worlds.

### Weather Changes

***'If the ash leaf appears before the oak,  
Then there'll be a very great soak.  
But if the oak comes before the ash,  
Then expect a very small splash.'***



### Birch

Birch is one of the first trees to grow on bare soil and thus it births the entire forest. Criminals were at one time birched to drive out evil influences on them, to renew them for the new year. Birch was associated with Thor, probably in recognition of his role as an agricultural and fertility deity. Birch is an incredibly useful tree - nearly every part of it is edible, and it's sap was an important source of sugar to Native Americans and early settlers. The inner bark provides a pain reliever and the leaves are used to treat arthritis. It's bark was used for everything from paper to canoe hulls, and axe handles were also made from Birch. Birch is most useful for fertility and healing spells.

## Hazel

In Europe and North America, hazel is commonly used for 'water-witching' - the art of finding water with a forked stick. Magically, hazel wood is used to gain knowledge, wisdom and poetic inspiration.



## Oak

Oak has been considered sacred by just about every culture that has encountered the tree, but it was held in particular esteem by the Norse and Celts because of its size, longevity, and nutritious acorns. The oak is frequently associated with Gods of thunder and lightning such as Zeus. In general, oak can be used in spells for protection, strength, success and stability; the different varieties will lend their own special 'flavour' to the magic.