



# A guide to our Secret Gardens

**How Hill Trust**

The Environmental Study Centre for the Norfolk Broads

For further information call 01692 678555



# Fascinating facts about our beautiful plants.

The notes below refer to the numbers on the map overleaf.

- 1 Japanese Maple *Acer palmatum***  
Beautiful slow growing trees with striking autumn colour.
- 2 Liquid Amber *Liquidambar styraciflua***  
The name refers to the tree's resin which was once used medicinally and as a perfume.
- 3 Ostrich Fern / Shuttlecock Fern *Matteuccia struthiopteris***  
Found in damp habitats throughout the northern hemisphere. The tightly wound immature fronds are called 'fiddleheads'. They can be eaten raw, but please don't eat ours!
- 4 Giant Rhubarb *Gunnera manicata***  
Native to South America, this is a truly exotic beast of a plant. Examine the ferociously spiked underside of the leaves and stalks. The tall red spikes are its flowers.
- 5 Skunk Cabbage *Lysichiton americanus***  
Can you smell something foul?! It might be the skunk cabbage. In spring the flower emits a pungent aroma which attracts its pollinators – flies and beetles.
- 6 Candelabra Primula**  
Candelabra form of the garden primula. It self-seeds in marshy places and is fully hardy.
- 7 Pin Oak *Quercus palustris***  
These American marsh oaks were planted from seeds when the gardens were first established. They usually only live for 90-120 years so these trees may be nearing the end of their lives.
- 8 Stewartia**  
A small deciduous tree related to Camellia, originally from Japan. It has white flowers in summer and smooth bark which peels off to form an attractive camouflage pattern.
- 9 Water Soldier *Stratiotes aloides***  
Rare, native, aquatic plants resembling the top of a pineapple, which rise to the surface when flowering then sink again during winter.
- 10 Gaultheria *Gaultheria shallon***  
The young leaves and berries once provided valuable food and medicine to the indigenous people of its native North America.
- 11 Himalayan Blue Poppy *Meconopsis***  
Discovered on a British expedition to conquer Everest, Meconopsis was introduced by the British Horticultural Society in 1926 to much excitement. Visit in late spring to view these striking flowers.
- 12 Dawn Redwood *Metasequoia glyptostroboides***  
Thought to have been extinct for 5 million years, living specimens of this deciduous conifer were found in a remote Chinese village in the early 1940s. This tree was one of the first seedlings planted in Europe.
- 13 Flowering Dogwood *Cornus florida***  
Creamy white flowers and beautiful autumn foliage with raspberry-like fruits.
- 14 Enkianthus *Enkianthus campanulatus***  
A deciduous shrub from North East Asia often found growing alongside rhododendrons in the wild.
- 15 Swamp Cypress *Taxodium distichum***  
Investigate the ground around this tree – can you see the knobbly woody 'knees' protruding above the grass? Once thought to supply oxygen to roots growing in waterlogged ground, it is more likely that they provide stabilisation.
- 16 Royal Fern *Osmunda regalis***  
A plant of reedbeds and carr woodland. The large clumps can persist for many years, forming a short, woody trunk at their base.
- 17 Katsura Tree *Cercidiphyllum japonicum***  
On warm autumn days the apricot coloured leaves of this Japanese tree emit a delicious burnt sugar smell.

- 18 Chilean Lantern Tree**  
*Crinodendron hookerianum*  
Stunning red lantern-like flowers.  
Gorgeous!
- 19 Wild Service Tree** *Sorbus torminalis*  
Native to British woodland although rare. The fruits, called chequers, must be 'bletted' (allowed to decompose) before they can be eaten.
- 20 Yellow Berried Rowan** *Sorbus*  
**'Joseph Rock'**  
Joseph Rock (1884-1962) was an Austrian botanist, anthropologist and explorer responsible for the collection of many Asian plants.
- 21 Willow** *Salix*  
These two ancient willows are older than the garden around them – a remnant of the marsh landscape of earlier times.
- 22 Caucasian Wingnut**  
*Pterocarya fraxinifolia*  
A member of the Walnut family, identified by long dangling catkins of winged seeds.
- 23 Pieris**  
This 'Forest Flame' variety produces a brilliant display of red leaves at the tips of its branches in spring, and fragrant white flowers
- 24 Marsh St. John's Wort**  
*Hypericum elodes*  
A native plant of water margins with small yellow flowers
- 25 Twisted Willow / Corkscrew Willow**  
*Salix*
- 26 Persian Ironwood** *Parrotia persica*  
Exceptional Autumn colour and attractive scaly bark. The dense wood from these slow growing trees is used for telegraph poles and bridge construction in its native Azerbaijan.
- 27 Guelder Rose** *Viburnum opulus*  
The name 'Guelder' came from the Dutch region of Guelderland. Not a rose at all, more closely related to the Elder. Alternative names include crampbark, water elder and European cranberry bush.
- 28 Winged Spindle** *Euonymus alatus*  
Named after the four corky 'wings' on the stems. This shrub grows wild in China and Japan. The green flowers are followed by reddish fruit which split to reveal bright orange seeds.
- 29 New Zealand Flax** *Phormium tenax*  
A hardy and impressive plant with tall leaves and flowers. Phormiums produce long fibres which have traditionally been used by the Maori people to make clothing, baskets, mats, string, nets etc.
- 30 Marsh Cinquefoil** *Potentilla palustris*  
A delicate native plant of boggy places, with deep red flowers.
- 31 Mountain Witch Alder** *Fothergilla major*  
What a great common name! Spiky white flowers with a beautiful scent and stunning autumn colour, as shown in the photo on the front cover.
- 32 European Larch** *Larix decidua*  
Like the Dawn Redwood and Swamp Cypress the European Larch is a deciduous conifer. It is the only one native to central Europe.
- 33 Water Violet** *Hottonia palustris*  
A pretty plant of ponds and ditches. It is actually a member of the primrose family, which can be seen in its spring flowers.
- 34 Buttercup Witch Hazel**  
*Corylopsis pauciflora*  
Fragrant, pale yellow bell-shaped flowers in spring.
- Rhododendrons**  
Large, evergreen leaves and stunning flowers in mid-May.
- Azaleas**  
All Azaleas are actually Rhododendrons but not all Rhododendrons are Azaleas. Azaleas are a group within the Rhododendron genus. They tend to be deciduous with smaller leaves. The heavenly scent from the Secret Garden's Azaleas is carried on the spring breeze throughout the nearby woods. It is truly lovely!



# Secret Gardens Map

Please take your time and explore the gardens fully. You don't need to stick to the paths, just watch your step.

See the notes that refer to the numbers on the map overleaf.



Donations to the upkeep of the garden welcome.



# Garden History

The gardens were established by the original owner of How Hill, Edward Boardman, soon after the house was built in 1904. The area was once a piece of rough grazing marsh, open and windswept. To create the sheltered garden seen today, oak, sweet chestnut and hornbeam trees were planted on the slope between the gardens and the house and scrubby carr woodland was allowed to establish on the lower lying land surrounding the area. Many exotic species were raised from seeds sent by Boardman's friends and correspondents from around the world.

The 'woodland walk' is a recent addition to the garden, opening up this formerly overgrown area. Rubbish and discarded materials found mostly on site have been recycled into the imaginative bug hotels of 'Habitat Hamlet'.

# Courses, Events & Venue Hire

How Hill offers residential and day courses for school children and adults as well as special events and venue hire. **For further details visit [howhilltrust.org.uk](http://howhilltrust.org.uk) or call 01692 678555.**



Photograph by Mike Page.



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