Fagus sylvatica
Common Beech

Fagus sylvatica is a large deciduous tree with smooth grey bark and a broad, spreading crown, leaves are corrugated, broadly elliptic, changing colour from yellow-green in spring, to a rich copper-russet in autumn.

Few plants, except fungi, will survive under it due to the close spacing of its foliage which casts a dense shade in the summer.

Flowers are small and green which are followed by a bristly fruit called beech mast which are popular with a variety of wildlife.

It makes a superb hedge/screen as its dense green foliage holds well and often the brown leaves of autumn will hang onto the branches until new foliage emerges giving year round screening.

The tree is a good choice for woodland or parkland planting.

**Plant Profile**

- **Name:** Fagus sylvatica
- **Common Name:** Common Beech
- **Family:** Fagaceae
- **Height:** Up to 30 metres
- **Width:** Wider than 15 metres
- **Demands:** Full Sun / Partial shade
- **Hardy:** Sun, frost, and wind resilient
- **Soil:** Chalk, Clay, Sand or Loam
- **Foliage:** Deciduous (Yellow/Green in Spring, Green in Summer and Russet Brown in Autumn)
The edible nuts produced by the tree were once used to feed pigs, and in France they are still sometimes roasted and used as a coffee substitute.