



**Manx**  
Wildlife Trust  
Treisht Bea-Feie  
Vannin

# Manx Native Tree List

Author: Andree Dubbeldam

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[www.mwt.im](http://www.mwt.im)



enquiries@mwt.im | Manx Wildlife Trust, 7-8 Market Place, Peel, IM5 1AB | Registered Charity 225 IOM | 01624 844432 | [www.mwt.im](http://www.mwt.im)

## Manx Native Tree List

Updated from the Botanical Society of the British and Ireland.

Native trees are those that colonised the Island without any human agency. This normally means they colonised 10-8 thousand years ago (8-10,000 years BP) between the end of the last Ice Age and when rising sea-levels separated the Isle of Man from what are now the islands of Great Britain and Ireland.

Pollen records of trees are preserved in peat bogs and these have been studied to give us a clue as to when trees became established and their relative dominance through to when native forests were cleared for farming in the Neolithic age (4-5 thousand years ago (4-5,000 years BP). Pollen from wind pollinated trees is well preserved, but not insect pollinated trees.

### Large Shrubs/Small Trees

Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*)  
Crab apple (*Malus sylvestris*)<sup>1</sup>  
Elder/Tramman (*Sambucus nigra*)  
Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*)<sup>2</sup>  
Hazel (*Corylus avellana*)  
Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*)  
Juniper (*Juniperus communis*)<sup>3</sup>  
Rowan/Cuirm (*Sorbus aucuparia*)  
Willow, bay (*Salix pentandra*)  
Willow, eared (*Salix aurita*)  
Willow, grey (*Salix cinerea*)

### Medium and Large Trees

Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*)  
Aspen (*Populus tremula*)  
Birch, downy (*Betula pubescens*)<sup>4</sup>  
Birch, silver (*Betula pendula*)<sup>5</sup>  
Native oak (sessile and intermediate) (*Quercus petraea* & *Q. x rosacea*)  
Willow, goat (*Salix caprea*)  
Wych elm (*Ulmus glabra*)

### Small and Medium Shrubs

Bog myrtle (*Myrcia gale*)  
Broom (*Cytisus scoparius*)  
Raspberry, wild (*Rubus idaeus*)  
Rose, burnet (*Rosa spinosissima*)  
Rose, dog (*Rosa canina*)  
Rose, field (*Rosa arvensis*)  
Rose, glandular dog (*Rosa squarrosa*)  
Rose, glaucous dog (*Rosa vosagiaca*)  
Rose, hairy dog (*Rosa corymbifera*)  
Rose, Sherard's downy (*Rosa sherardii*)

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<sup>1</sup> Probably very rare as a native tree, but much introduced as well.

<sup>2</sup> Previously recorded as non-native, but almost certainly native due to abundance of migratory bird sown seed, optimal habitat and the rich Manx Gaelic folklore associated with the tree.

<sup>3</sup> Became extinct in the 1940s. Reintroduced to wild since 2016.

<sup>4</sup> The native type is *Betula pubescens* var. *pumilla*, the 'Arctic downy birch'.

<sup>5</sup> True silver birch is not conclusively native, however silver birch like trees are common in Dhoon Glen, Groudle Glen and elsewhere, but their true identification is still a matter of research.

<b>Shrubs and trees that are probably but not conclusively native.</b>	
Ash ( <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> ).	Has very small presence in the pre-historic pollen record (only found in one sample), but native and common throughout British Isles.
Rose, sweetbriar ( <i>Rosa rubiginosa</i> ).	Formally classed as non-native, but large populations have since been found in more convincingly native situations in Jurby dunes.
Spindle ( <i>Euonymus europaeus</i> ).	Native status depends on a recently discovered single bush in ancient woodland in Santon Gorge. A likely relic.
Willow, purple ( <i>Salix purpurea</i> ).	Often planted/introduced for basket making, but its wild population coincides with Central Valley fens, the exact type of native habitat this species occurs in.
Yew ( <i>Taxus baccata</i> ).	Native on limestone and sandstone soils in Britain and Ireland. Likely that bird sown trees would infrequently establish themselves on Isle of Man.

<b>Trees previously native to the Island but extinct through natural prehistoric climate changes.</b>	
Scots Pine ( <i>Pinus sylvestris</i> ).	One of the first trees to dominate the British Isles and Isle of Man after the last Ice Age, the species was pushed to its current native range in the Scottish Highlands as it is uncompetitive against oak and other broadleaves that dominated as the climate became warmer (Called the 'Holocene Climate Optimum'). This caused its extinction in the Isle of Man around 5,000 years ago.
Sub-alpine Willows.	It is likely that there are several sub-alpine willow species that would have been common on the hills for thousands of years before a mixture of warming climate and neolithic farming caused their decline and disappearance. Because willow pollen from peat deposits is hard to distinguish it impossible to say which species, if any, grew here. The smallest and most alpine of all these species, the dwarf willow ( <i>Salix herbacea</i> ) clings on to the summit of Snaefell to this day.

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