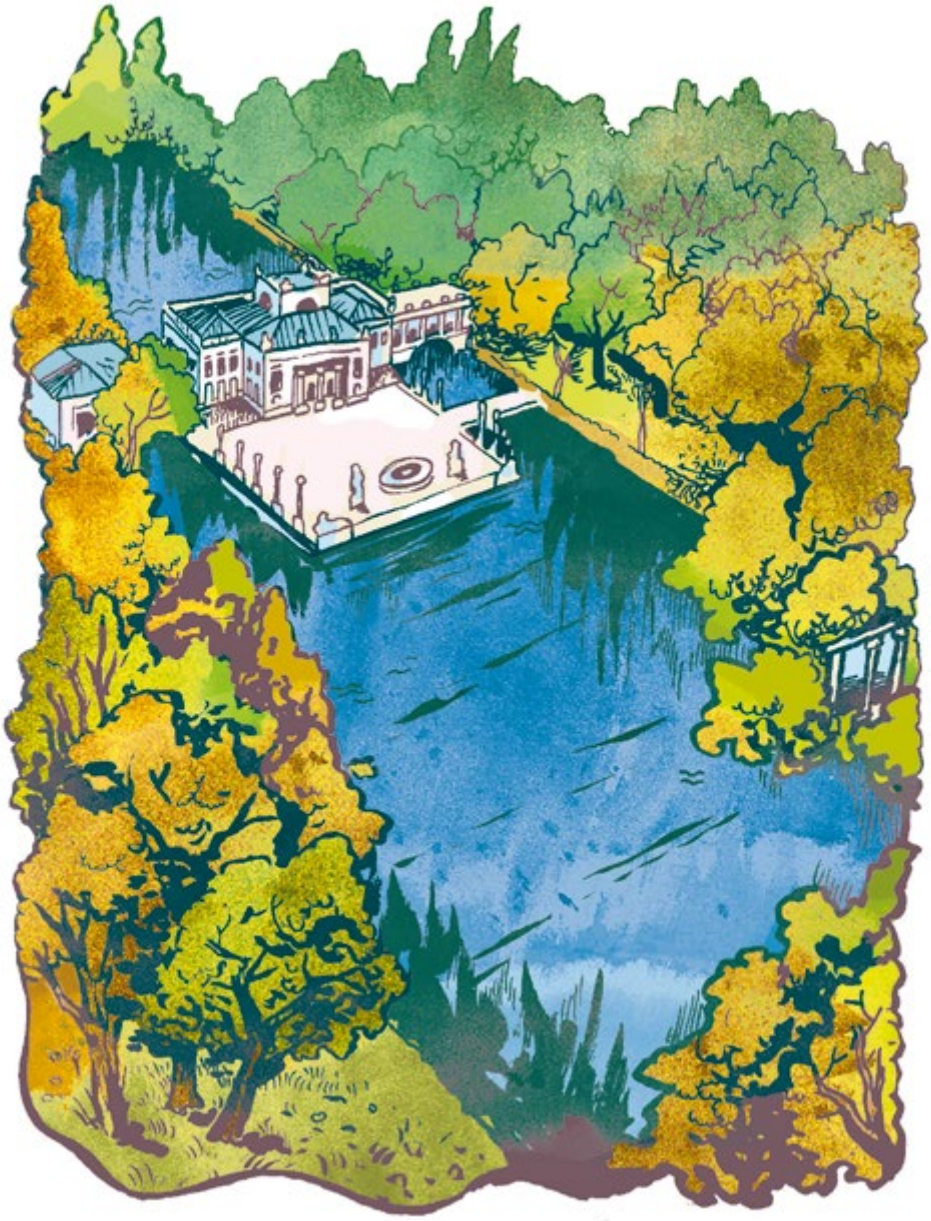
ROYAL LAZIENKI MUSEUM

ON THE THREE-CONTINENT TRAIL

The Royal Łazienki Trees



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Europe

1. Norway spruce – *Picea abies*

Owing to the characteristic structure of their crown, spruces are resistant to snowfall. Their shallow root system makes them susceptible to wind. It is a species that is very sensitive to air pollution, so it does not do well in cities. Although its wood is soft, it is a valuable raw material for various uses. Spruces are often bought as Christmas trees.

There is a supposition that the English name „spruce" (pronounced /spru:s/) derives from the Polish phrase „z Prus" (meaning „from Prussia"). According to some sources, the Englishmen who were buying spruce wood to build ships in the 15th century, when hearing the Polish description that the wood came from Royal Prussia, called it „spruce".

Spruce needles are quite short, stiff and sharp-pointed. The cones can reach up to 20 centimetres in length and face downwards, hanging on the spruce shoots. These trees can reach a height of up to 50 metres and can live for up to 300 years.

Structures resembling cones can be seen on some spruces. These are spruce galls that form on trees attacked by spruce gall adelgids, a small aphid species.

This specimen grows at the back of the Myślewicki Palace. This extraordinary tree, towering over the Palace, has its own e-mail address: swierk@lazienki-krolewskie.pl! We encourage you to write a message to the spruce tree – it will certainly be happy to write back to you.

Illustrations (from left):
European spruce, European spruce – cones, European spruce – needles

2. European white elm – *Ulmus laevis*

Elms usually grow in river valleys, where – along with poplars, ashes and alders – they form riparian forests. They tolerate short-term flooding well. In the 18th century, when the Royal Łazienki area was a wetland, quite a lot of elms grew here. The wood of this species is heavy and hard, which is why it is a raw material valued in furniture-making and construction industry. The elm motif often appears in the myths and customs of many cultures and religions.

Elms have large leaves that are smooth and shiny on top and softly fuzzy underneath. Their characteristic feature is a strongly asymmetrical base and double-serrated leaves. The fruit of the elm tree is a small nut with a delicate wing.

Elms can reach heights of up to 30 metres and live for up to 400 years. You can often see young suckers on the trunk. The base of the trunks of these trees is often wide and its characteristic feature is the presence of buttress roots, i.e. lateral roots growing horizontally from the base of the trunk and protruding above the ground surface, forming wide strips over time.

This specimen grows at the back of the Myślewicki Palace, towering over its surroundings.

Illustrations (from left):
European white elm, European white elm – leaves, European white elm – buttress roots

3. Common hornbeam – *Carpinus betulus*

It is a medium-sized tree. Its bark is dark grey and smooth to the touch, although with age it becomes increasingly wavy, forming large grooves called ribbing in older specimens. Hornbeam wood is sometimes called ironwood because it is extremely hard. It is used to make drum sticks, among other things. Hornbeams tolerate pruning very well, and that is why they are often planted as hedges. At Royal Łazienki, they can also be found in the form of bosquets in the Italian Garden.

Hornbeams produce fruits called hornbeam nuts. They are encased in a characteristic three-lobed bracts and are a delicacy for the Łazienki squirrels. The leaves of the common hornbeam are oblong and double-serrated, turning yellow in autumn.

3a The place where you are standing is the oldest part of the landscaped area which is the remnant of the Italian garden from the 17th century. Its current layout is the result of the reconstruction of the path pattern, including preservation of any random trees that have been growing, with the trimmed hornbeams forming a hedge. It is a so-called bosquet, i.e. a garden structure designed to imitate a forest, with paths and a hedge on both sides.

3b This tree has a characteristic structure because its trunk forks quite low down. Around it we can find a lot of three-winged nuts and leaves of this species.

The average height of hornbeams in a tree form, without pruning, is 20-30 metres, and the maximum lifespan is 400 years.

Illustrations (from left):
Common hornbeam, Common hornbeam – trunk, Common hornbeam – three lobed samaras, Common hornbeam – three-winged leaf with a nut, Common hornbeam – leaves, Common hornbeam – in the form of a bosquet

4. Common beech – *Fagus silvatica*

This is a very large, sprawling tree with a dense crown, towering over other species. Its leaves are leathery with hairy edges, and the buds have a characteristic spindle shape. It usually has smooth steel-grey bark. In the olden days, before paper started to be used for writing, the Germanic peoples used beechwood tablets, and that is why they gave books a name that referred to this tree (today a book is das Buch in German). Since ancient times, these trees have been venerated and highly valued. They were rarely struck by lightning, hence the popular adage: “Avoid oaks, seek out beeches”.

Every 5 to 8 years, beeches produce edible fruits called beech nuts. They used to be an important component of human diet and animal feed. Beech nuts are rich in fat and are eagerly consumed by wild boar. Forests in which only beeches grow are called beech woodlands.

The beech you are standing next to is a red variety. It was planted in the 19th century. You can send a message to the Łazienki beech at its private e-mail address: buk@lazienki-krolewskie.pl.

The average height of these trees is 30-50 metres, and their lifespan is 300-500 years. One of the Łazienki beech trees, growing in the Romantic Garden, is a natural monument.

Illustrations (from left):
common beech – a red variety, common beech – leaves, common beech – nuts in a hairy bag, common beech – trunk

5. Black alder – *Alnus glutinosa*

Also called common alder, it is a species that thrives in wetlands, such as the shores of ponds, lakes or rivers, sometimes forming groups called alder carrs. In the 18th century Royal Łazienki, these trees were very common. Nowadays most of the Łazienki alders grow in the vicinity of the ponds.

Their bark is dark grey, almost black (hence probably the name “black alder”). Alder flowers, or catkins, after blooming turn into small cones from which small, winged nuts spill out. These plentiful seeds provide food for many species of birds, especially in winter. Alder cones are rich in tannins.

It is a fast-growing species. The flowers develop before the leaves, in very early spring (February-April). Alders begin to bear fruit when they are 20-30 years old.

In the place where you are standing, you can see two black alders that adorn the South Pond. They grow in the company of a gingko tree and a weeping beech tree.

Alders have an average height of 25 metres, and their lifespan is not long – about 150 years.

Illustrations (from left):
black alder – two trees, black alder – leaves, black alder – immature cones

6. Small-leaved lime – *Tilia cordata*

It looks very impressive and has a long lifespan; its trunk can reach a thickness of up to 200 centimetres. The shape of the leaves resembles a heart – the symbol of love (which is also indicated by its Latin name cordata – meaning heart-shaped). Limes are trees pollinated by insects. Bees make honey from the nectar of its flowers. Lime flowers are also widely used in natural medicine – lime flower infusions are used for colds, among other things. The fibrous layer called phloem, located just under the bark, is the main building material for squirrel nests.

Lime trees were worshipped in various religions. They are associated, among others, with the Marian worship in Święta Lipka (Holy Linden) in the Mazury district of Poland.

In spring, near lime trees, you can smell the intense scent of their flowers, called lime tops. The wood of the lime tree is soft. It is used, among others, in woodcarving and turnery, but above all, lime wood is ideal for making musical instruments, such as violins. The famous altar by Veit Stoss in St Mary's basilica in Kraków is made of lime wood.

The leaves of the small-leaved lime have tufts of rusty fine hairs growing in the corners of the vein joints (unlike the broad-leaved variety, which has white hairs). The tree bears fruit in the form of small nuts that ripen at the end of summer.

The specimen you are standing next to is the first one in the lime tree avenue. Take a few steps away from the tree and have a look at the habit of its crown – it has a shape very characteristic of a lime tree.

The average height of lime trees is 30-40 metres, and the lifespan of this species is 600–800 (or even up to 1200) years.

Illustrations (from left):
small-leaved lime, small-leaved lime – leaves, small-leaved lime – nut

7. Common oak – *Quercus robur*

This is the mightiest tree that can be found in Poland and throughout Europe. It is sometimes called the king of trees, and has been worshipped for centuries. It grows slowly and reaches impressive dimensions. The oak was dedicated to many gods, including Zeus, Jupiter, Odin and Wotan. In many religions, oaks were considered sacred trees, and in folk tradition they were given the name of "devil's trees".

Oak wood is hard and highly valued in furniture-making and carpentry.

The leaves of the common oak are oblong, with irregular, deeply indented lobes. The fruits of oak trees are acorns, whose little caps (called cupules) grow on long stalks.

Acorns are a food source for many animal species, including wild boar, mice and jays. In autumn, under the Łazienki oaks, you can see ducks swallowing these fruits whole. People also used to eat acorns in the past – ground acorns were added to flour. You can also make acorn coffee, which is considered a very nutritious drink.

7a Here you will see a mighty oak that stands guard over the Modernist Garden. The characteristic spherical shape of its crown means that it was able to grow freely throughout its life and did not have to compete with other trees.

7b The oaks you are standing next to are a remnant of the historical oak forest of the former zoo. The whole group of these trees was heavily damaged by artillery fire in January 1945.

The average height of oaks is 30-40 metres. These trees have a long lifespan and can live to 500-800 years on average, with some record-breaking specimens living up to 1500 years. In the Łazienki Park, there are 3 common oaks that are natural monuments.





Illustrations (from left):
common oak (7a i 7b), common oak – trunk, common oak – leaves, common oak – acorn on a stalk

8. Common yew – *Taxus baccata*

It can be cultivated as a tree or as a shrub. It grows very slowly and is a dioecious species, which means that there are female and male specimens.

Yews are almost entirely poisonous, and because of this property yews were regarded as a magical tree – in mythology, yew symbolised the underworld and was a symbol of funeral rites. Yews were used during Epiphany and Easter to dispel evil spirits. The only non-poisonous part of the yew is the pink casing called aril. It is edible and has a very sweet taste, so it is loved by animals. On the other hand, even the seeds inside the aril are poisonous. It tolerates pruning well, hence it is often planted in hedges. Its needles are soft, up to 3 centimetres long and often bend downwards.

Yew wood is very valuable; in the Middle Ages, it was used to make longbows and furniture, among other things. However, yews are small and slow-growing. Yew has been almost completely eradicated from the natural environment. For this reason, it has been continuously protected in Poland since 1946.

The yews you are standing next to are over 80 years old (they were probably planted around 1940). You can see two forms here – a shrub and a tree. They are accompanied by a California nutmeg and a Canadian hemlock, whose descriptions you can find along the route of the America path.

The average height of yew trees is 2-15 metres, and their lifespan is about 1,000 years or even up to 3,000 years.

Illustrations (from left):
common yew, common yew – needles and seeds in a pink casing,
common yew – needles, developing seeds and pink casings with seeds inside

9. White poplar – Populus alba

It is also known as a “white tree”. It is a large and long-living tree. It grows fast, especially in the first few years of its life. A twenty-year old white poplar can have a trunk with a circumference of about 100 centimetres – for comparison, the trunk circumference of a lime tree and an oak of the same age would be 50 centimetres and 30 centimetres, respectively.

It grows naturally in the valleys of large rivers. The bark of young trees is light grey; with age, it cracks and darkens, forming grey diamond-shaped pores on a white background. Young shoots and leaves are covered with dense, tangled soft hair. The purpose of this covering is to protect the plant from adverse weather conditions – too strong sunlight, cold, excessive evaporation or drying wind.

The poplar tree next to which you are standing is a large, ancient tree that forks low down into three huge branches. It is possible that it is a condensed tree – i.e. three trees that have merged together. The sprawling crown has an irregular shape. The trunk has some old marks, including a crack from a lightning strike. The first protective steel clamps were put on it in the 1950s, with additional binds installed later. Every year, a pair of nuthatches settle and breed in one of the hollows. The trunk circumference of this specimen is over 7 metres.

The average height is 30-40 metres, and the lifespan is 300–400 years.

Illustrations (from left):
white poplar, white poplar – leaves, white poplar – trunk

10. Common ash – Fraxinus excelsior

It is the tallest deciduous tree on the European continent, and its wood is used to make furniture. At the end of autumn, its falling leaves are still green. In the past, it was believed that ash trees deterred vipers. Ash trees like very humid air, so they thrive best near rivers or lakes.

The ash tree in front of you is probably a remnant of the original set of plantings and is one of the oldest trees of Royal Łazienki. Above the bifurcation, there is old and new dynamic cabling protecting the crown from splitting. Guy-wires run from the upper branches to the ground to support this ancient tree and prevent it from being damaged. In 2022, a marten lived in one of the upper hollows, and a common merganser duck tried to breed in a hollow at the base in 2024 – unfortunately, it did not succeed.

The average height of ash trees is 30–40 metres, and their lifespan is 300–400 years.

Illustrations (from left):
common ash, common ash – leaves, common ash – trunk, common ash – a hollow near the base.

11. Weeping willow – Salix sp.

It is a small tree, usually with a short trunk and hanging shoots. Willows are most often planted near water. Their sight creates a melancholic mood. This is also the purpose of the willow growing near the Belvedere Pond in the Romantic Garden.

In the past, it was believed that these trees were favoured by evil spirits and witches. The early flowers of the willow – catkins – are a symbol of spring, and their bark contains salicin – a medicinal ingredient that is found in aspirin.

Based on the engraving by the Polish painter and sketch artist Zygmunt Vogel, depicting this area, it can be concluded that a willow tree grew in this place as early as in the 18th century. Due to its short lifespan, the tree growing in the park today is a replacement planting. In the 1960s and 1970s, this willow was a fast-growing monopodial tree, but after breaking up, it developed into a multi-trunk tree. Today, we can admire how it leans towards the surface of the water of the Belvedere Pond.

Weeping willows can grow up to 24 metres; they have a short lifespan and live up to 150 years.

Illustrations (from left):
weeping willow, weeping willow, weeping willow – leaves

12. European larch – Larix decidua

In folk tradition, larch symbolised beauty, durability and youth. Its Polish name “modrzew” derives from the word “modry” (blue) and refers to the light green colour of its needles. This tree tolerates air pollution well.

Larch resin was used in folk medicine and also to make a balsam called Venetian turpentine, which is still used in painting today to dilute paints, clean painting tools and create various artistic effects.

Its wood is very resistant to rot. The upper branches grow horizontally, whereas the lower ones tend to droop. Larches grow quickly, but when they reach 100 years, they start to rot.

Larch is unusual because it is the only conifer in Poland that sheds its needles for winter. In autumn, its needles – like leaves – turn yellow.

Larch wood is very valuable and durable – it tolerates even constant immersion in water. The buildings erected on water in Venice are built on larch stilts.

The larch you are looking at stands near the Water Tower. It is one of the oldest trees in the entire garden. It was probably planted in the 18th century. In records dating back to those times, there is a mention of “larch planting”.

The average height of larches is 40–50 metres, and their lifespan is 500–700 or even 800 years.

Illustrations (from left):
European larch, European larch – cone and needles, European larch – needles

America

1. Red oak – *Quercus rubra*

It has large, decorative leaves that change colour beautifully in autumn from yellow to dark red tones (hence its name). The leaves are large, lobed and serrated. Even after winter, we can still find them on top of the mulch – they do not decompose as easily as the leaves of our native trees. The fruits are acorns, which are large and bulky, and ripen only in the second year after the tree is planted. Red oak is considered an invasive species, i.e. one that displaces native species.

Although it is an alien species in our natural environment, the image of its leaves can be seen on Polish coins: one, two and five groszy coins. The number of leaves on the groszy coins corresponds to the denomination of the coin (e.g. five leaves on the five groszy coin).

The oak in front of you was planted in the 1960s. Thanks to full access to light, it has developed a typical, sprawling crown. From the shore under the tree, there is a view of the northern façade of the Palace on the Isle, towards the vista of the North Pond, finished off by the King Jan III statue along the Royal Promenade.

This tree grows up to 32 metres and lives for up to 200–400 years.

Introduction*: 1818

*Introduction of species originating from other geographical regions into the native biocenosis; it can be intentional or accidental.

Illustrations (from left):
red oak, red oak – leaves, red oak – acorns

2. Black walnut – *Juglans nigra*

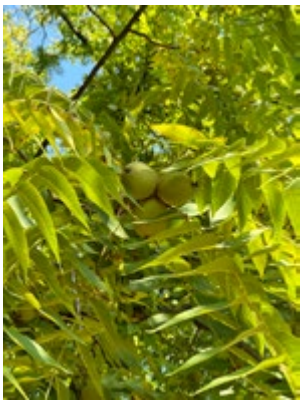
It originates from the United States, where it grows in forests and provides valuable wood for furniture making. The bark is black in colour, which is probably where the name of this nut tree comes from. Its leaves can be up to 60 centimetres long and consist of 15–23 leaflets. The fruits are very hard nuts, which are a delicacy loved by the Łazienki squirrels. The outer shell of the nut has a very characteristic smell, reminiscent of a combination of citrus fruit and ginger.

Black walnut trees were planted in Royal Łazienki at the request of King Stanisław August.

Next to the avenue running along the western shore of the Lower South Pond, there are two black walnut trees growing next to each other, which are perfectly visible from the Cascade Bridge. They bear fruit regularly, so under their crowns you can find the remnants of the nuts eaten by squirrels.

Their average height reaches 30 metres, and their lifespan is up to 250 years.

Introduction: 17th century (Europe)



Illustrations (from left):
black walnut, black walnut – bark, black walnut – leaves, black walnut – leaves and nuts

3. Douglas fir – *Pseudotsuga menziesii*

Also known as Oregon pine or Columbian pine. It grows in the mountains on the Pacific coast of North America. The cones have characteristic three-pointed tips. Since the 17th century, it has been introduced into forests. Douglas fir was named after the Scottish botanist and collector David Douglas. The bark of older specimens is rough and irregular and is marked with orange fissures. The needles, on the other hand, are soft and flexible.

Until 2024, two Douglas firs were growing in this place; unfortunately, one fell down during a storm.

The coastal Douglas fir variety is the tallest conifer in the world and can reach up to 120 metres! In Poland, it grows up to 35 metres. It can live up to 700 years.

Introduction: 1826 (England)

Illustrations (from left):
Douglas fir, Douglas fir – trunk, Douglas fir – bark, Douglas fir – cone

4. Thorny locust – *Gleditsia triacanthos*

The thorny locust tree has long thorns that can reach up to 10 centimetres and are arranged in bunches, usually in groups of three. The leaves appear only in mid-May, and in autumn they turn an attractive yellow colour. The fruit of the thorny locust tree is a long, twisted cherry-coloured pod, which can be up to 40 centimetres long! The seeds inside the pod are eagerly consumed by birds. After drying, the pods make a pleasant rattling sound, so they can be used as musical instruments.

The thorny locust here has a wide access to sunlight and a lot of space because it was planted as a solitaire tree*, which was a characteristic feature of 19th century gardens. This specimen is a ‹defenceless› form, which differs from the typical species by the lack of thorns on the trunk. It only has short thorns along the shoots.

It can reach a height of up to 30 metres, and has a short lifespan, as it lives for up to 150 years.

Introduction: after 1700

*Solitaire tree – a tree that grows in an open area with no other specimens in close vicinity. Solitaire planting is designed to highlight the ornamental features of the tree.

Illustrations (from left):
thorny locust, thorny locust – leaves,thorny locust – trunk, thorny locust – pods

5. Weymouth pine – *Pinus strobus*

It has blue-green needles with light stripes on the outside. They can reach a length of 5-15 centimetres. They are soft to the touch and grow in tufts of five. The cones, 10-15 centimetres long, grow in twos or threes at the top of the branches. Mature cones are grey-brown, and sometimes remain on the tree even after the seeds have spilled out. They smell more intensely than the Baltic pine cones.

In the Łazienki gardens, the Weymouth pine grows in a pine grove (along with other species), which invokes classicist landscape park designs. The joyful, cheerful atmosphere of the grove (pineto) turns into a large, open space with exotic tree species, including the adjacent thorny locust tree.

The average height of the Weymouth pine is 50 metres; in Poland it reaches 30 metres. Lifespan – up to 200 years.

Introduction: 1705 (England – brought by Captain George Weymouth); 1824 (Poland – Warsaw Botanical Garden)

Illustrations (from left):
Weymouth pine, Weymouth pine – needles, Weymouth pine – cone

6. Canadian hemlock – *Tsuga canadensis*

The crown of the hemlock tree has an irregular shape, with a characteristically bent top and a rather dark colour. Along with the yew, it is one of the best shade-tolerant coniferous species. It has prettily crested, short, silver-bottomed needles. It produces tiny cones about 2 centimetres long, which are initially green and closed; when ripe, they turn brown and woody, and open up. It tolerates pruning well, so it can be used in hedges.

The hemlock tree next to which you are standing grows between an American cluster tree (on the right) and a characteristic lime tree with six trunks.

The average height reaches 30 metres, or 15-20 metres in Poland; in their natural habitat, they live for up to 500 years.

Introduction: 1736 (Europe)

Illustrations (from left):
Canadian hemlock, Canadian hemlock – needles and immature and mature cones, Canadian hemlock – trunk

7. Robinia (false acacia) – *Robinia pseudoacacia*

It is commonly called an acacia, which is incorrect because it is a species different from the acacias that grow in Africa and Australia. It is also called a pea tree because its seeds are hidden in a casing resembling a pea pod. There are sharp thorns on the shoots.

The tree is named after the French gardener Jean Robin, who brought it to Europe in 1601. Robinia was first planted in the gardens of King Henry IV, and then it quickly spread to the gardens of other European royal courts. It has low habitat requirements, it is resistant to frost and drought and has no natural pests or diseases, which allowed it to gradually spread throughout Europe.

It is used as an ornamental plant because of its beautiful, fragrant flowers that are edible. Apart from the flowers, almost the whole plant is poisonous. The flowers are melliferous – bees use them to produce acacia honey. When the false acacia blooms, you can smell the beautiful, sweet scent from afar. Its wood, very resistant to the destructive effects of water, is used to make furniture and terrariums.

Robinia is considered an invasive species as it causes habitat changes and is difficult to control.

The false acacia you see grows at the entrance to the car park in Parkowa Street. Its trunk forks at a height of about one metre. Along the Chinese Avenue, you will find more trees of this species: you can take a closer look at the bark, leaves and seeds of the false acacia.

It reaches a height of 15–25 metres and lives up to 150–200 years.

Introduction: 1601

Illustrations (from left):
false acacia, false acacia – leaf, false acacia – bark, false acacia – pods

8. California nutmeg – *Torreya californica*

The California nutmeg tree, also known as California Torreya, is a dioecious tree, which means that there are male and female specimens. It has very stiff and prickly needles, which can be up to 4–7 centimetres long. There are two white stripes on the underside of the needles.

It was planted after World War II, around 1945. The California nutmeg is a very rare tree in Poland. Although in winter it is protected by straw mats, it froze several times, and yet it keeps recovering. In 1970, it was a multi-stem tree. In 2015, it had 13 trunks, which can still be seen today. It is similar to the yew trees growing nearby, so it is difficult to tell them apart.

It grows up to 15–22 metres in height.

Introduction: 1872

Illustrations (from left):
California nutmeg, California nutmeg – needles

9. Blue spruce – *Picea pungens*

The crown of the blue spruce resembles a cone. The pale blue needles are very stiff and prickly (hence its other name – prickly spruce). The tree tolerates drought well and does not have any specific soil requirements. It thrives best on its own, but tolerates being planted in rows, and can also be used to plant hedges.

The specimen in front of you was planted after the war, when the exotic garden in front of the New Orangery was being laid out.

In Poland, it reaches a height of up to 30 metres.

Introduction: 1896 (Poland)

Illustrations (from left):
Blue spruce, Blue spruce – needles

10. American tulip tree – *Liriodendron tulipifera*

This tall, fast-growing tree naturally grows in the valleys of large rivers. Its leaves have characteristic four lobes, which turn yellow in autumn. It owes its name to the flowers because their shape resembles tulips. Due to their attractive appearance, tulip trees were planted in gardens across Europe in the 18th and 19th centuries. They grow quickly, but are sensitive to strong winds. Tulip tree flower buds are called «beaver's tails» owing to their appearance and flattened shape.

The Łazienki tulip tree specimen is still young, but despite its small size, it already adorns the Royal Gardens with its beautiful leaves.

It reaches a height of up to 36 metres and lives up to 200-300 years.

Introduction: 1653 (England)

Illustrations (from left):
American tulip tree, American tulip tree – leaves.

Asia

1. Oriental thuja (formerly: oriental arborvitae) – *Platycladus orientalis*

A small tree, rarely reaching a height of 10 metres, often with multiple trunks. It is native to China and Korea, where it has a symbolic meaning – it is planted on the graves of monarchs and near temples. This evergreen plant produces cones with hook-like projections on their scales. The leaves are needles that have a scaly, flattened structure and are almost odourless. Multiple trunks are a characteristic feature of this tree.

Our specimen grows directly in front of the west wing of the Palace on the Isle and was already a large tree back in 1944, as can be seen on an aerial photograph from that period.

It can reach a height of 15 metres.

Introduction: 1690 (in Europe)

Illustrations (from left):
oriental thuja, oriental thuja – flattened needles, oriental thuja – cones with hooked protuberances

2. Japanese apricot – *Prunus mume*

Despite its name, this species does not originate from Japan, but from China. It blooms in early spring – in April/May, with the flowers appearing before the leaves. The Japanese apricot blossom is the national emblem of Taiwan. The fruits of this tree are red, edible and are considered to have medicinal properties. In Japan and China, the Japanese apricot is widely cultivated in several hundred varieties.

The tree in front of you has been planted recently. Due to its origin, it has found its place in the Chinese Garden, and its neighbour is the cherry tree of the Kanzan variety, growing on the other side of the path.

It reaches a height of up to 9 metres.

Introduction: 1841–1844 (Netherlands)

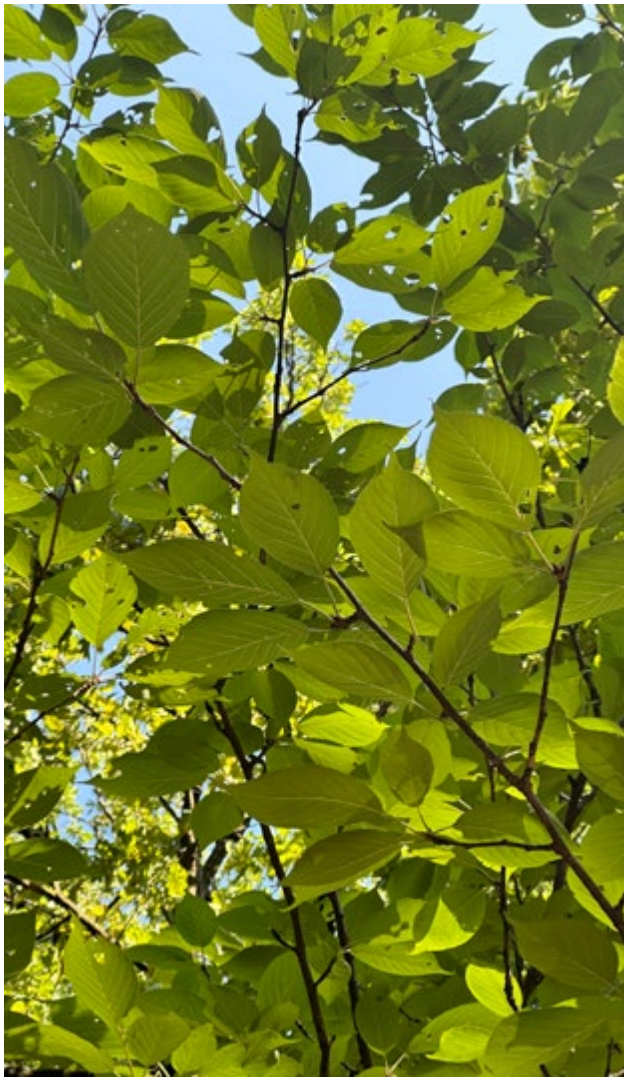
Illustrations (from left):
Japanese apricot, Japanese apricot – leaves

3. Japanese cherry ‘Kanzan’ – *Prunus ‘kanzan’*

This is an ornamental cherry tree, which is most likely a variety originating from Japan, where it has been known since the 17th century. The crown of this tree is umbrella-shaped and consists of rigid diagonal branches growing out from one place on the trunk. Pink, abundant flowers appear in May. The leaves turn yellow/orange in autumn.

It reaches a height of 5–10 metres.

Introduction: there is no information as to when exactly it was brought to Europe.



Illustrations (from left):
Japanese cherry ‘Kanzan’, Japanese cherry ‘Kanzan’ – leaves

4. Korean poplar – *Populus koreana*

It originates from the Far East. This species is very rare and generally little-known. It tolerates low temperatures better than other poplars. Its leaves are thick, leathery, dark green on top, and whitish with fine white hairs underneath. They develop in early spring and they have a pleasant smell. In autumn they change colour to gold.

In the Łazienki garden, it grows alongside other exotic species in a select group of rare trees. It is the only specimen of this species at Royal Łazienki, and probably also in the whole of Warsaw (including the Botanical Garden). There is a small Chinese poplar next to it.

It reaches a height of up to 25 metres.

Illustrations (from left):
Korean poplar, big Korean poplar and small Chinese poplar, Korean poplar – bark, Korean poplar – leaves

5. Chinese poplar – *Populus simonii Carriere*

It is native to China and is also called Simon's poplar. In Poland, it probably started to be cultivated before World War II. The crown is narrow and the trunk is covered with pale grey bark. The pale green leaves are the earliest to develop out of all poplars – at the end of April – and are often the widest above half the length of the leaf blade. In autumn, however, they turn lemon yellow. In Europe, only male specimens are grown. This tree is resistant to drought and frost and tolerates air pollution well.

Since the 1930s, it has been growing next to the path in a select group of exotic plants (including the Korean poplar). This variety is commonly used in cities. In this place, it looks attractive, especially in a contrasting combination with the Korean poplar. The trunk of this tree is slightly bent and the crown is irregular, which is due to the presence of strongly dominant trees in the vicinity. The growing branches are perpendicular to the trunk.

It reaches a height of up to 20 metres.

Introduction: 1862 (France)

Illustrations (from left):
Chinese poplar, Chinese poplar – leaves, Chinese poplar – bark

6. Amur cork tree – *Phellodendron amurense*

It originates from the Far East. The trunk is short and covered with thick, cork-like bark with regular fissures. It has been cultivated since 1856. Its leaves are feathery and consist of 7-13 leaflets. This tree is dioecious. It has small flowers that are melliferous, and its black, globe-like fruits smell of turpentine and remain on the tree for a long time – in winter, they are often eaten by birds. Its bark is used to make cork for bottle corks or pinboards, among other things, but it is not as commonly used for this purpose as the cork oak. The Amur cork tree is an important plant in Asian medicine.

This cork tree is one of seven trees of this species planted here at the turn of 1960s/1970s. These plants look attractive in autumn, when their leaves turn yellow. Walk up to the cork tree and touch its bark, and you will feel it bend under your fingers. To compare, you can also touch a hornbeam tree growing nearby, and you will notice the difference in the softness of the bark of these trees.

It reaches a height of up to 17 metres and lives to 250–300 years.

Illustrations (from left):
Amur cork tree, Amur cork tree – leaves, Amur cork tree – bark

7. Japanese magnolia – *Magnolia kobus*

This species originates from Korea and Japan. Its crown is globe-like, wide and low-set. It produces large white flowers with a delicate smell, which appear before the leaves. The fruits are red and up to 12 centimetres long. It begins to bloom only when it is 10-11 years old.

Japanese magnolias form a compact composition of several specimens here, which look especially stunning in spring, when they blossom abundantly. The Japanese magnolia is dominated by the beautiful Magnolia x soulangeana ‚Alexandrina', with much larger, pinkish-white flowers.

It reaches a height of up to 10 metres.

Illustrations (from left):
Japanese magnolia, Japanese magnolia – leaves, Japanese magnolia – fruits

8. Katsura tree – *Cercidiphyllum japonicum*

It is native to Japan, where it grows in mixed forests and is an endangered species. Its wood is a valued sculpture material. The young leaves are reddish-brown and purple, and later turn green. In autumn, they change colour to yellow.

The specimen that can be found in Łazienki has two trunks and an irregular, asymmetrical crown, which was impacted by the proximity of other trees casting shadows. It stands out most in autumn, when the yellow-turning leaves fall, smelling like freshly baked cookies.

It reaches a height of 10–30 metres.

Introduction: 1865, 1899 in Poland

Illustrations (from left):
Katsura tree, Katsura tree – leaves, Katsura tree – bark, Katsura tree – trunk

9. Maidenhair tree – *Ginko biloba*

This endemic* species is native to China (it is also called a Chinese or Japanese gingko tree). This type of tree has been planted for centuries near temples in China, as well as in Japan and Korea. It has a straight trunk, and the crown is loose and regular in shape. Although it is a gymnosperm tree, it has a leaf blade that resembles duck's feet and has characteristic fan-shaped veins. In autumn, its leaves turn lemon yellow. Gingko biloba is a dioecious tree, which means that there are male and female specimens. In female specimens, the seeds are surrounded by a plum-shaped casing and have an unpleasant smell when they fall, which is why the male specimens tend to be planted as ornamental trees. At Royal Łazienki, you can see a female specimen not far from the Palace on the Isle. Gingko trees are ancient trees, considered a relic, and are an example of „living fossils" because they were already around in the Jurassic period (200-145 million years ago). They have medicinal properties.

The specimen growing in the Romantic Garden, near the monumental beech, is the largest of the gingko trees growing in the Royal Łazienki. It was planted in 1960. It is 25.5 metres high and contrasts well with the nearby dark conifer group. It is a male specimen.

It reaches a height of 20–30 metres.

The lifespan of this tree is extremely long; the record-breaking specimens in the natural habitat in China are over 3,000 years old. Outside its natural habitats, it lives to about 2,000 years.

Introduction: 1727 (Europe)

*Endemic – a species or taxon that is unique to a given area and does not occur naturally in other places.

Illustrations (from left):
maidenhair tree, maidenhair tree – bark, maidenhair tree – leaves, maidenhair tree – arils with the seeds inside