

Horse chestnut

About horse chestnut

Horse chestnut trees can grow up to 40m and live around 300 years. They are best known for their seeds – the conker which are surrounded by spiky green cases. The horse chestnut was introduced into the UK from Turkey in the sixteenth century and is now found growing in parks, gardens and streets. You will rarely find them in woodlands.

The flowers provide nectar and pollen for bees and other insects and the leaves provide food for the triangle moth caterpillar. Mammals will eat the conkers, including deer.

The wood of horse chestnut isn't very strong but it is used for carving. The famous use for horse chestnut is the game of conkers.

Horse chestnut tree



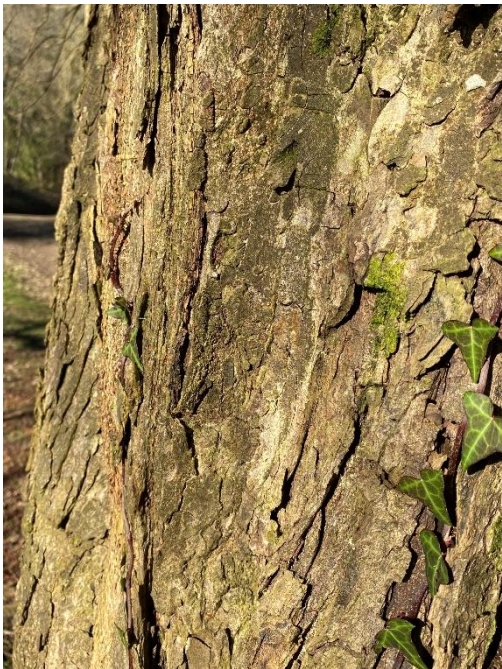
Identifying horse chestnut

#1 Location – you are likely to find horse chestnut in parks, gardens and as street trees but not often in woodlands



Buds

#2 Buds and fruit – the horse chestnut produces large, reddish and sticky buds that grow in opposite pairs and the famous conker in its spiky case that appears in autumn



Bark on a mature tree

#3 Bark – the bark of the horse chestnut is smooth and pinky-grey when young, darkening and developing scaly plates as the tree ages

Where to find horse chestnut trees in Torfaen

You will find a mature few horse chestnuts in Pontypool Park

Conker and part of a case

