

1. Weeping Willow *Salix babylonica*

Description	Leaf/ Tree
<p>This is the largest species of willow, with mature trees growing up to 25m. It is a typical weeping willow and is dioecious, meaning male and female flowers grow on separate trees. Traditionally willows were pollarded (pruned a few feet from the ground), to provide fodder for animals and increase the tree's longevity.</p> <p>Did you know? The cricket bat willow is a hybrid of the white willow and crack willow. This strong wood is ideal for bats.</p> <p>Value to Wildlife. Moth Caterpillars species feed on white willow leaves, including the puss moth, willow ermine, eyed hawk-moth and red underwing. The catkins are an important source of early nectar and pollen for bees and other insects, and the branches make good nesting and roosting sites for birds.</p> <p>Mythology and symbolism. All willows were seen as trees of celebration in biblical times, but this changed over time and today willows are more associated with sadness and mourning. Willow is often referred to in poetry in this way, and is depicted as such in Shakespeare's Hamlet, with Ophelia drowning near a willow tree.</p> <p>Uses of Willow. Traditionally, willows were used to relieve pain associated with a headache and toothache. Aspirin is derived from salicin, a compound found in the <i>Salix</i> species bark which was chewed for pain relief in medieval Europe.</p>	 