

# Winning Posters 2010



Photos: Anne Jefferies

## Broadstone's Magnificent Trees

We are very fortunate to have so many trees in Broadstone, many of them magnificent oak trees. In the Spring Newsletter I asked the question, "Where is the biggest & oldest Oak Tree in Broadstone?"

There has been quite a lot of interest and some have argued that the best looking tree in Broadstone is not an oak tree at all, but the Stone Pine at the top of Budgen's car park. I have to admit that having probably passed the tree a thousand times I had never noticed it, however, it is certainly a great tree, and they could be right.

It has a girth of 4.27 metres.



Others have drawn attention to the Chile Pine, or Monkey Puzzle tree on the Broadway, which is certainly very unusual.

There have been reports of some very large oak trees, up to 330 cms in circumference. However, the largest oak tree in Broadstone would appear to have girth of 4.27 metres also, indicating a possible age of 400 years. What was happening when this tree started life in about 1610? The tree was recently given a clean bill of health by a tree surgeon. I understand that this great oak grew originally by the side of the old stream across which the stepping stones were placed which gave Broadstone its name. On the other side of the road was a farm originally called Broadstone Farm, but which changed its name when



Broadstone was taken up by the halt used for the railway. Broadstone was mostly heath before the coming of the railways.

Have I provided enough clues as to where you can see this tree? The tree can be found at Broadstone OS ref SZ-00254-95981, at the bottom end of Higher Blandford Road.

There is a much larger tree, a redwood, with a girth of 5.60 metres, near the first hairpin in Higher Blandford Road. Such trees were only introduced from California in 1853. I am told it was planted by a Miss Cotton (her family supplied the name for Cotton Close). It will grow much larger yet.

My grateful thanks to John Palmer for the above information, he advises that he has registered the trees on the “Ancient Tree Hunt” website on [www.ancient-tree-hunt.org.uk](http://www.ancient-tree-hunt.org.uk)

You can find more information about Broadstone trees on John’s website at [www.eyemead.com/BH18tree.htm](http://www.eyemead.com/BH18tree.htm)

*Roy Godfrey*

## An Old Oak Tree in Broadstone

### Pedunculate Oak

#### Location SY 99274/94705

This old oak tree (*Quercus robur*) is one of those situated in a small piece of deciduous woodland on Pinesprings Place Local Nature Reserve. The following notes describe how the age of the tree was measured and its role as a keystone species in the ecology of the nature reserve.

The age of the tree was determined by its girth using the unit given in the Spring Newsletter of the Broadstone Residents Association. i.e. 1 cm 100 years at 1.3 m from the ground. At first sight the tree appeared to be older than it actually was for the trunk looked very large. However, the tree had branched below the height at which the measurement was required to be taken so the emphasis was placed on the main branch of the tree. The approximate measurement of this main branch was 318 cm making the tree 318 years old. It is to be noted that woodland trees have an average of 1.25 cm of girth per 100 years so this figure has to be revised to 275 years (Dorset Veteran Tree Survey 1999).

The oak tree was leaning on a slope and hence covered a greater area than if it had been upright. It was linked to the wildlife of the other habitats of the Reserve, (meadow, scrub, wet heath), both in terms of the structure and ecology of the Reserve. During the years of 2005 to 2006 the Jay and the Great Spotted Woodpecker used the structure of the tree as nesting sites. In terms of ecology, during the same period, the oak trees on the Reserve had a more intimate relationship with the 67 species listed in Table 1.

In theory, the oak tree is host to 284 species of insects in Britain (Southwood 1961) so the figure of 27 insect species on this reserve represents 10% of the possible number that could be present.

*Dr. P. Mathers.*

*With thanks to Mr M. Downing who helped with the measurement of the tree.*

**Table 1. The Species Associated with the Oaks on Pinesprings Local Nature Reserve 2005 to 2006**

Order/ Family	No. Species	Order/ Family	No. Species
<b>Flora</b>			
Lichens	10	Fungi	6
<b>Fauna</b>			
*Flies	3	*Bees and wasps	14
*Beetles	4	Spiders	5
*Bugs	2	Harvestmen	1
*Lacewings	2	Birds	17
*Sawflies	2	Mammals	1

\* Insect species

