

Branching Out: Using the Wisdom of Trees

Workshop

Symbolism of Trees

Acacia Tree Symbolism - It symbolizes respite on the journey, an oasis, a promise of finding something rare after a long journey – perhaps a secret love.

Apple Tree Meaning Apple trees symbolize magic, youth, beauty and happiness. The apple has long been associated with the symbolism of immortality. The mystical Isle of Avalon, famed place of eternal rest for Celtic heroes including King Arthur, is literally "the apple land" or "apple island." In Scandinavia, the North-European gods and goddesses were fed an apple every evening by Iduna, the goddess of spring who nurtures an apple orchard in Asgard.

Alder Tree Symbolism the Alder tree gives you courage to tackle the things that you have been trying to avoid. The energy of the Alder tree is exhilarating and being near one can reduce anxiety and worry.

Ash Tree Symbolism Ash trees symbolize sacrifice, sensitivity and higher awareness. The wood is white, strong and straight-grained. Ash is a large deciduous tree with smooth, gray bark on young trees which becomes fissured with age. The leaves are green above, white below, and turn yellow, red, or purple in the fall.

Aspen Tree Symbolism Aspen tree symbolism includes determination and overcoming fears and doubts. Renowned for their golden autumn foliage, aspen trees are the only broadleaf tree in the Rocky Mountains. Individual aspen trees live only 100 years.

Australian Bottlebrush Tree Symbolism – Bottlebrush trees symbolize Abundance, Laughter and Joy. The flowers of the Bottlebrush represent birth and the ability to sustain all things that are new to our life.

Holy Bael Tree Symbolism -Holy Beal or Bilwa tree is sacred tree and used to worship Lord Shiva. Bael trees grow in several countries especially in Asian countries like India. It has the highest value in religious rituals. It was used as medicine and essential food product from ancient age.

Beech Tree Symbolism Beech tree symbolism includes tolerance, past knowledge and softening criticism. The beech family comprises about 900 species of both evergreen and deciduous trees and shrubs. Beech trees have alternate simple leaves with pinnate venation.

Bonsai Tree Symbolism Bonsai tree symbolism includes harmony, peace, balance and all that is good. The cultivation of bonsai trees originated in China where they were fashioned into the shapes of dragons, serpents and other mythical animals. Eventually the art of bonsai tree cultivation became a practice of Japanese Buddhist monks who preferred the creation of more elegant forms.

Birch Tree Symbolism Birch tree meanings include new beginnings and cleansing of the past. Birch trees are also associated with vision quests. The common name birch is derived from an old Germanic root meaning "white, bright or to shine." The birch is considered the national tree of Russia, where it used to be worshipped as a goddess during the Green Week in early June.

Broom Tree - See Juniper Tree

Cedar Tree Symbolism Cedar trees meanings include healing, cleansing and protection. It is widely grown as an ornamental tree, planted in parks and large gardens for its drooping foliage. It is the national tree of Pakistan. The name "deodar" is derived from modern Indian language derivatives of the Sanskrit name 'devdar', meaning "timber of the gods".

Cherry Tree Symbolism Cherry tree symbols mean death and rebirth and new awakenings. Because of their considerable value as both food and ornamental plants, many cherry and other fruit tree species have been introduced to parts of the world to which they are not native. Many of the Old World species are grown for ornament or fruit, and have been planted throughout the world.

Chestnut Tree Symbolism - It is symbolic of a very long life and an ability to attune to and receive ancient wisdom.

Cypress Tree Symbolism Cypress tree symbolism includes understanding the role of sacrifice and is associated with the god of the underworld, Hades. Many species are grown as decorative trees in parks and in temples. A few species are grown for their timber, which can be very durable.

Dogwood Tree Symbolism - It represents joy and the possibility of something beautiful and unexpected on its way.

Elder Tree Symbolism Elder tree symbols mean birth, death, and the fairy realm. The berries are a very valuable food resource for many birds. Both flowers and berries can be made into elderberry wine and an elderberry brandy is produced in Hungary. The flowers may be used to make an herbal tea, which is believed as a remedy for colds and fever.

Elm Tree Symbolism Elm tree meaning includes strength of will and intuition. During the 18th and 19th centuries, elms were popular as ornamentals by virtue of their rapid growth and variety of foliage and forms. Elm wood is valued for its interlocking grain, and consequent resistance to splitting.

Eucalyptus Tree Symbolism The eucalyptus tree is symbolic of prudence. The name is derived from the Greek word "eucalyptos," which means "well covered." This name refers to the protective membrane that covers the budding flowers of the tree. The eucalyptus tree is also symbolic of Australia, where it is an important native tree. Eucalyptus has been used medicinally to treat the common cold, headaches due to colds, bronchial disease, throat inflammations, rheumatism, coughs, asthma and flu.

Fig Tree Symbolism - The fig tree appears in the story of the Garden of Eden when, after eating the forbidden fruit, Adam and Eve covered their nakedness with leaves that are usually said to be from the fig tree. The fig tree has a sacred meaning for Buddhists. According to Buddhist legend, the Buddha, achieved enlightenment while sitting under a bo tree, a kind of fig tree. The bo or bodhi tree remains a symbol of enlightenment.

Fir Tree Symbolism The fir tree has long been a symbol of springtime and immortality. More recently, fir trees are one of the primary trees used for Christmas trees, with the modern practice of Christmas trees beginning around 1500 in Germany. The tradition of bringing green branches into one's home to celebrate faith in eternal life was part of winter rituals as far back as the Egyptians. Today the use of a Christmas tree is nearly universal.

Holly Tree Symbolism Holly tree symbols include protection, overcoming of anger and spiritual warrior. In many western cultures, holly is a traditional Christmas decoration, especially in wreaths. The wood is heavy, hard and whitish. One traditional use is for chess pieces, with holly for the white pieces, and ebony for the black.

Juniper Tree - The Juniper tree is a symbol of being on a heroic journey. It represents staying true to yourself and having integrity in all that you do no matter how many twists and turns the journey you are on makes.

Maple Tree Symbolism Maple trees meanings includes balance, promise and practicality. Maples are important as source of syrup and wood. Dried wood is often used for the smoking of food. They are also cultivated as ornamental plants and are beneficial for tourism in the autumn.

Oak Tree Symbolism The oak is the mightiest of trees and symbolizes strength and courage. The ancient Romans thought oak trees attracted lightening and thereby connected the oak tree to the sky god, Jupiter and his wife, Juno, the goddess of marriage. Thus, the oak is a symbol of conjugal fidelity and fulfillment. The oak tree was regarded by Socrates as an oracle tree. The Druids likewise ate acorns in preparation for prophesying. In addition, the Druids believed the leaves of the oak tree had the power to heal and renew strength.

Olive Tree Symbolism - To extend an Olive Branch means to extend kindness when trying to repair a damaged relationship. It is the symbol of reward, victory, strength, fruitfulness and peace.

Palm Tree Symbolism Palm tree symbols include peace and opportunity. In many historical cultures, palms were also symbols for such victory and fertility. Today, palms remain a popular symbol for the tropics and vacations. Many common products and foods are derived from palms, and palms are also widely used in landscaping for their exotic appearance.

Pear Tree Symbolism - Because it can produce fruits for decades, the pear tree also represents longevity and comfort. In Christianity, the pear tree frequently appears in connection with Jesus Christ and alludes to His love for mankind. It epitomizes the Christian promise of salvation and eternal life. Similarly, the ancient Chinese believed that the pear tree was a symbol of immortality. The destruction of a pear tree, in turn, symbolized tragic, unexpected death.

Pine Tree Symbolism Pine tree symbolism includes creativity, life, longevity and immortality. Pine trees are recognizable by both their needle-like leaves and cones. Pines are commercially among the most important of species used for timber and wood pulp in temperate and tropical regions of the world. Some species have large seeds, called pine nuts, that are harvested and sold for cooking and baking.

Redwood Tree Symbolism - It symbolizes time as infinite and ancient and being able to stay in one place patiently until receiving the answer you need.

Walnut Tree Symbolism - In ancient times, the walnut symbolized fertility. Fertility is the manifold and copious ability to grow and develop, or to produce fruit. This image of fertility is consistent with descriptions used in Song of Songs. As fertility, it represents new beginnings. The Holy Spirit flourishes in us so that we produce fruit, such as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control

Willow Tree Symbolism Willow tree meanings includes magic, healing, inner vision and dreams. The leaves and bark of the willow tree have been mentioned in ancient texts from Assyria, Sumer and Egypt as a remedy for aches and fever. Native Americans across the continent relied on it as a staple of their medical treatments. This is because they contain acetylsalicylic acid, also known as aspirin.

References: List of Trees developed through personal study as well as research compiled through two online sites:
www.universeofsymbolism.com and www.livingartsoriginals.com



Karla Gerard, Artist