

## Who Am I?

Trees of my species are pretty with silver-white bark which sheds layers like tissue paper and becomes black and rugged at the base.



As I have matured, my bark has developed dark, diamond-shaped fissures.



My flowers are called catkins. Male catkins are long and yellow-brown hanging in groups of two to four at the tips of shoots, like lambs' tails. Female catkins are smaller, short, bright green and erect.



If you look at my leaves, you will see that they are light green, small and triangular-shaped with a toothed edge. They change colour to yellow in autumn.



My wood is tough and heavy, making it suitable for furniture production, handles and toys.



I symbolise renewal and purification. In older times, my twigs were used to drive out the spirits of the old year; gardeners still use them today to make a besom, or broom, to 'purify' their gardens. I am also a symbol of love and fertility

