



8

Devon whitebeam

Devon's very own tree, this member of the whitebeam family is thought to have originated as a hybrid of wild service and common whitebeam trees in the distant past. In fact, there are at least five rare whitebeam species found in Devon. These trees' ability to produce fertile seed without a need for their flowers to be fertilized results in genetically distinct clones restricted to localised areas. But the advent of mechanical hedge-flailing has led to a loss of such trees from many parts of the county. **The Devon whitebeam still flourishes on several of DWT's Culm grassland reserves in northern Devon, thanks to staff and volunteers maintaining hedges in the best condition for wild plants and animals.**