

The beech

In Denmark, the beech bursts into leaf at the beginning of May. It is a phenomenon which gets media coverage on the news and there is a kind of competition between various locations about which place the beech first bursts into leaf.

The northernmost frontier of the beech is Denmark and the southern Sweden. The Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) is nominated the national tree of Denmark.

In the late 19th century, the beech forests represented more than half of all the forests in Denmark. Today, the beech forests represent only about 14 percent of the country's total forest area.

The fine, light green leaves of the beech are a delicacy in a good salad. Exactly the fine, light green foliage makes a beech forest appear light and open. But only few plants can thrive under the dense light green foliage.

The beech mast and the leaves contain a toxin, and the turnover of the autumn defoliation is very slow. The characteristic reddish-brown forest bottoms beneath the beech trees make it impossible for many other plants to grow. Therefore, the beech forests remain open and bright.

This summer day we enjoy the coolness underneath the large beech trees. Only a couple of sunbeams shine through the branches in the dense green foliage.



Snogeholm, Skåne/Scania County, Sweden, July 2017