

Plants used in the wreath:

English oak (also known as common or pedunculate oak) - *Quercus robur*

Common Hawthorn - *Crataegus monogyna*

Dog Rose – *Rosa Canina*

Explanation (up to 500 words)

The main plant in my wreath is oak. When I am in an oak forest I like to imagine Robin Hood hiding in the old oaks. Oak tree is the most common tree in the forests of central and southern England. It is often called the national tree of England. King Arthur's round table was made of oak. Ancient Greeks, Celts and the Norse considered the Oak to be a sacred tree. Greeks associated it with Zeus, because being the tallest tree of the forest, oak is prone to lightning strikes. I think it is great to have a plant in an olympic wreath which was known to people who invented the olympic games.

Oak is a symbol of strength and endurance which is great for sports.

My second plant is Hawthorn which is also known as the May Tree, as it blossoms in May. It is often called the Tree of Love. Hawthorn has been common in Britain for millennia, and probably has the largest amount of legends, myths and traditions than any other British tree. It is a most common tree of English hedges. In autumn its berries feed birds and provide colour and beauty. According to old English tradition, hawthorn is given as a token of friendship and love. Often the May Queen was crowned with hawthorn blossom.

My last plant is the dog rose. The dog-rose is the County Flower of Hampshire. It is one of only two native English roses. It was the rose that grew up around Sleeping Beauty's castle. It is a common plant of English native hedges attractive to the wildlife.

Conservation message (a very short one)

We need to protect the magnificent oak forests of England because they are full of beauty, history, legends and myths, and are the home for wild animals, beautiful birds and our national tree.