

Getting started with 'Treezilla: map the trees in your street'

Decide which trees you are going to map

- Perhaps all the trees in your street, garden, school playground or a small section of your local park.

Gather the equipment

- You'll need a tape measure to measure tree girths, a 3 metre flexible tape can be obtained from a dressmaking shop or supermarket for about £3.
- A camera or smartphone to take pictures of each tree.
- A tree identification book would be useful although not essential.

Sign up with treezilla.org and if you have a smartphone download the Treezilla app, available on iOS and Android.

Adding a tree using the Treezilla website or app

- Click on the 'add a tree' button (see Figure 1).

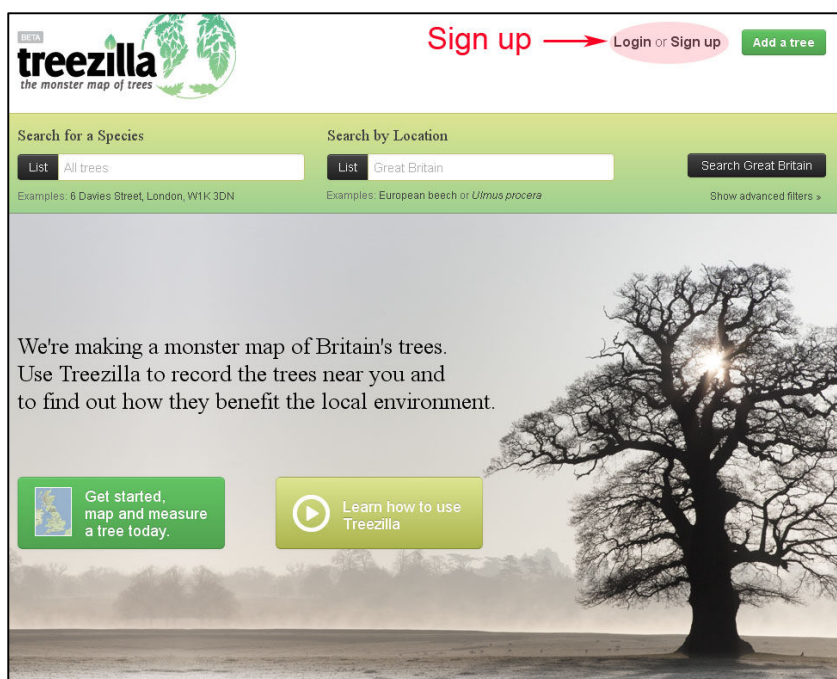


Figure 1: The treezilla.org homepage and 'Sign up' button.

- If you are using the website, type an address in the first address box in Step 1 to centre the map on your area (see Figure 2). This will also give you a yellow dot surrounded by an orange ring. Using your mouse, move this dot to the exact tree you want to map. Make sure you are well zoomed in so that you are sure it is exactly the right tree. If you are using a smartphone or tablet computer then it may already know where you are so just move the dot to the correct tree.

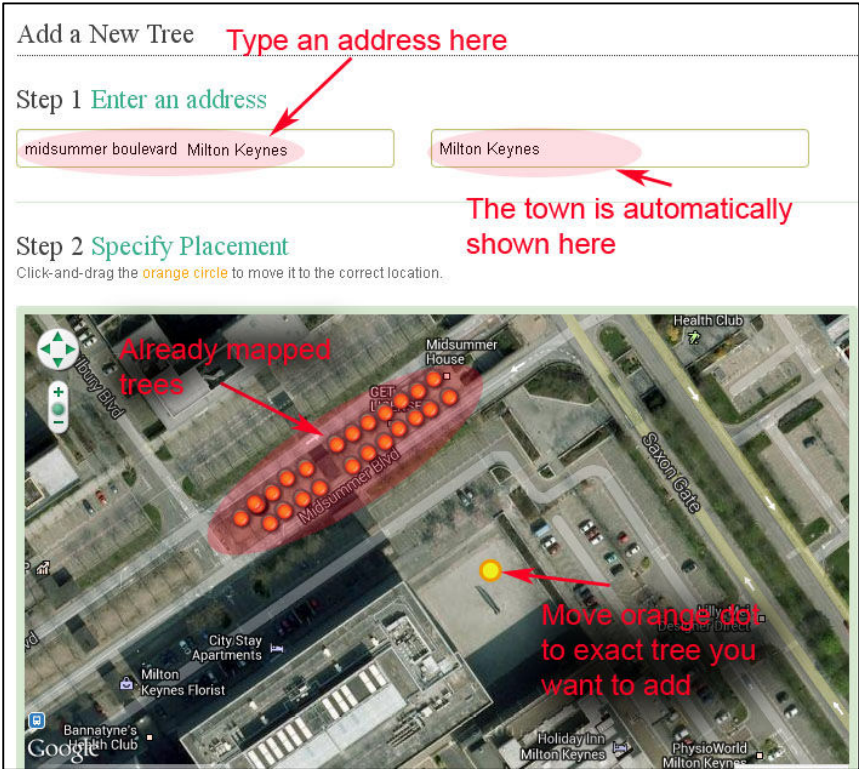


Figure 2: Adding a new tree.

- Follow the on-screen instructions to add tree details. If you can't fill in all of the information don't worry. You can edit any entry you make later. Note you may want to select 'Let me continue editing this tree' and then click the 'Add this tree' button (Figure 3). This allows you to upload photos of the tree and enter additional information about the tree.

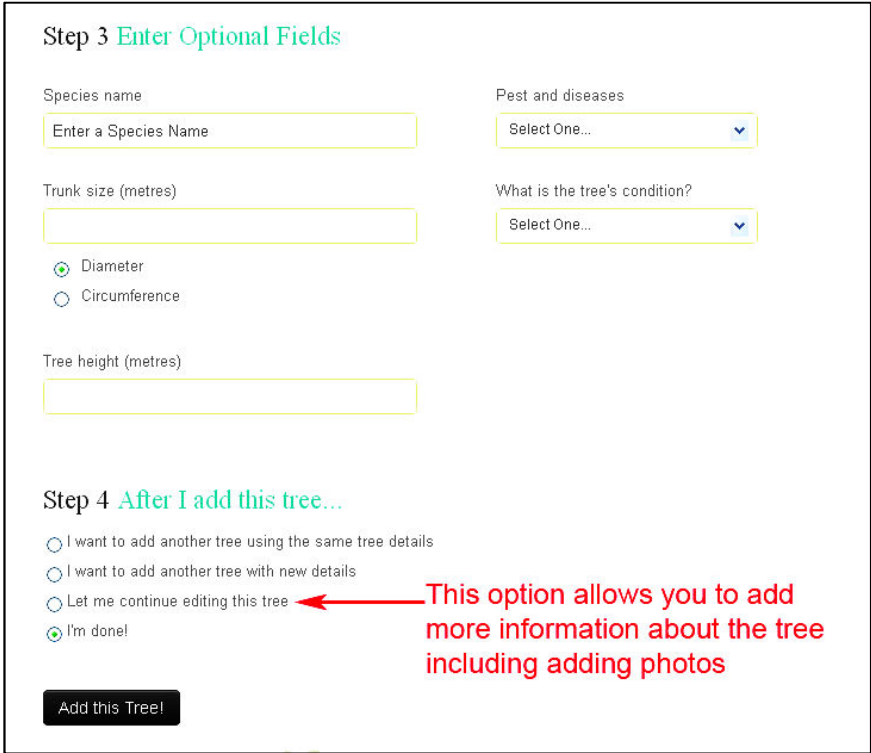


Figure 3: Adding additional information to your tree entry.

- One very important piece of information that is easy to record is the trunk diameter or circumference; this is used in the ecosystem service calculations. Foresters have special callipers enabling them to directly measure diameter but for most other people it is much easier to measure circumference with a simple tape measure. Put the tape round the tree at a height of about 1.3 m and measure the circumference. There is a video showing how to do this <http://vimeo.com/11119129> it also shows how to deal with difficult situations such as leaning trees or those with low branches. Note the video is from an American tree mapping group and they use a slightly different height to measure circumference.
- Then move on to map the next tree.

Identifying trees

Often the most difficult aspect is how to identify the tree. Take photos of the tree showing its overall shape and size. It can also be helpful to have pictures of the leaves, buds, flowers, fruit and bark. Sometimes it is not possible to reach the branches but there may be fallen leaves or fruit on the ground that you can photograph, just make sure they are from that particular tree and you are sure which pictures are from which tree!

You can upload the pictures to Treezilla when you are recording the tree. Someone else online may then be able to help you with the identification. However it is good to have a go at identifying the tree yourself as this is the best way to learn.

There are plenty of tree identification books such as 'The Collins Tree Guide' by Owen Johnson and David More. There are websites such as <http://www.nhm.ac.uk/nature-online/british-natural-history/urban-tree-survey/identify-trees/tree-key/> and <http://www.ispot.org.uk/webkeys/index.jsp> which have interactive keys to trees. There are also quite a number of smartphone apps that can help with tree identification. There are only a small handful of native species of trees in Britain but there are thousands of types of introduced trees that can grow here, it is usually these introduced species that are planted as street trees. The electronic identification guides generally only have about 100 of the most common species so it is possible you may come across trees that are not listed. In these cases it's particularly important that you have clear pictures of as many features of the tree as possible so that someone can help with the identification.

Health and safety

When recording street trees, road traffic is usually the main danger. Ensure that you remain on the pavement away from traffic and you may also want to wear high visibility clothing. It is usually a good idea to work in pairs with one person measuring and the other recording the information. Be aware of the possibility of street crime especially if using a smartphone or similar device. Dress appropriately for the weather conditions. Watch out for possibility of falling branches especially in windy conditions.