



# The Ash and The Beech: The Drama of Woodland Change

*Richard Mabey*

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From ash die-back to the Great Storm of 1987 to Dutch elm disease, our much-loved woodlands seem to be under constant threat from a procession of natural challenges. Just when we need trees most, to help combat global warming and to provide places of retreat for us and our wildlife, they seem at greatest peril. But these dangers force us to reconsider the narrative we construct about trees and the roles we press on them.

In this now classic book, Richard Mabey looks at how, for more than a thousand years, we have appropriated and humanised trees, turning them into arboreal pets, status symbols, expressions of fashionable beauty - anything rather than allow them lives of their own. And in the poetic and provocative style he has made his signature, Mabey argues that respecting trees' independence and ancient powers of survival may be the wisest response to their current crises.

**Originally published with the title *Beechcombings*, this updated edition includes a new foreword and afterword by the author.**

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