

Holm Oak	<i>Quercus ilex</i>	il-Balluta
Common English name	Scientific name	Maltese name

Where is this tree found in the world – (Species Distribution)

The Holm oak is native to the central-western part of the Mediterranean including the Maltese Islands.

What is the preferred habitat for this tree?

It is often found together with other broadleaved evergreen plants in woodlands and Maquis. It tolerates arid land and maritime exposure.

Is it green all year (evergreen) or does it change according to the season (deciduous)?

It is evergreen.

How tall can it grow? (Usual or maximum height)

It may grow to a max of 25m.

What are the leaves and flowers like?

Its leaves are leathery and woolly, dark green, long and oval. Its flowers bloom from May to June. Individual flowers are either male or female, but both can be found on the same plant. Its flowers are wind pollinated.

What are the fruits like?

After pollination, female flowers develop into acorns which ripen from September to October.



What do humans use this tree for?

As its growth rate is fast and it has the ability to grow in degraded land, it is used to restore habitats and also as coastal shelterbelts because it withstands maritime exposure. It may also provide firewood and charcoal.

Does this tree have legal protection?

The Holm Oak is strictly protected in all locations in Malta (according to the ERA 2018 list of trees and woodland protection regulations).