

Friary Park – The Pinetum– Sandra Lea’s notes



The Pinetum

- 20 **Wild Cherry** *Prunus Avium Plena*
Native to UK. The timber is as hard as oak and with a fine grain but only available in short lengths, consequently mainly used in inlays or small turned or carved pieces.
- 21 **Hornbeam** *Carpinus betulus*
Native to the northern hemisphere. The common English name 'hornbeam' derives from the hardness of the woods (likened to horn) and the Old English 'beam', a tree. For general carpentry, hornbeam is rarely used, partly due to the difficulty of working it. The wood is used to make carving boards, tool handles, coach wheels, piano actions, and other products where a very tough, hard wood is required, including cogs in windmills.
- 22 **Irish Yew** *Taxus baccata fastigiata*
Native to the UK. All Irish Yews derive from one survivor of two found on a hillside in County Fermanagh before 1780. The Yew is long-lived, outliving any other tree, partly because the wood is exceedingly strong. It is also very flexible and was used to make the long bows used at the Battle of Agincourt. In folklore it is a symbol of immortality and

consecrated to the gods of the dead. It is thought that many churchyard yews may be over a thousand years old and were planted at burial sites long before the building of the church. All parts of the yew are poisonous ... except to deer who forage the lower branches. For this reason the yew is seldom found in the wild as farmers have eliminated them.

- 23 **Blue Atlas Cedar** *Cedrus atlantica glauca*
Native to the Atlas Mountains of Morocco. In times of global warming the Atlas cedar is useful in cultivation because it is more tolerant of dry and hot conditions than most conifers. Glauca is the blue form.
- 24 **Scots Pine** *Pinus sylvestris*
A high altitude mountain tree native to Europe. It is an important tree in forestry as the wood is used for pulp and sawn timber products.
- 25 **Corsican Pine** *Pinus nigra*
Native to southern Italy and Sicily The wood is very straight and free of knots and is used for construction, pit props plywood and paper. Turpentine is extracted from the resin and the leaves for medicinal and other purposes. The trees are tapped for resin, which in its solid form is used by violinists on their bows.
- 26 **Lawson Cypress** *Chamaecyparis lawsonia*
Native to California and Oregon. It was first discovered in 1854, by collectors working for the Lawson & Son nursery in Edinburgh, Scotland, after whom it was. The wood is light yet has great strength and rot resistance and is , known for its highly fragrant ginger aroma. Due to the straightness of its grain, it is also one of the preferred woods for the manufacture of arrow shafts and also for use in stringed instruments. Its fine grain, good strength and tonal quality are highly regarded for soundboards in guitar making.
- 27 **Brewer's Weeping Spruce** *Picea brewerana*
Native to a few small mountainous areas of Oregon and California, growing at moderately high altitudes where the thick, drooping branches are adapted to cope with heavy winter snows. It is named in honour of the American botanist William Henry Brewer.
- 28 **Giant Fir** *Abies Grandis*
Native to the Northwest of North America. A young specimen of a tall and strait tree (it grows to 100 metres, the tallest growth in the British Isles). It is an important source of commercial timber although the timber is weak and is only used for paper-making, crates and packaging. The new growth has a citrus scent when crushed.
- 29 **Blue Atlas Cedar** *Cedrus atlantica glauca*
See 23.
- 30 **Leyland Cypress** *Cupresso leylandii*
In 1845, the Leighton Hall, Powys estate was purchased by the Liverpool banker Christopher Leyland. Edward Kemp was commissioned to laid out the gardens, which included redwoods, monkey puzzle trees and two North American species of conifers in close proximity to each other – Monterey cypress and Nootka cypress. The two parent species would not likely cross in the wild as their natural ranges are more than 400 miles apart, but in 1888 the hybrid cross occurred when the female flowers or cones of Nootka cypress were fertilised by pollen from Monterey cypress. A hardy, fast-growing natural hybrid, it thrives on a variety of soils and sites and is commonly planted in gardens to provide a quick boundary or shelter hedge. The plant's rapid growth (up to a metre per year) and great potential height – often over 70 ft tall, it can become a serious problem. In 2005 in the United Kingdom, an estimated 17,000 people were at loggerheads over high Leylandii hedges.
- 31 **Western Red Cedar** *Thuja plicata*

Native to the Northwest of North America. It is long-lived; some trees are known to have lived for over a thousand years. It was used extensively by the Native Americans of the Pacific coast - some tribes refer to themselves as 'people of the redcedar' because of their extensive dependence on the tree for basic materials. This includes timber for constructing housing and totem poles, and crafted into many objects, including masks, utensils, boxes, boards, instruments, canoes, vessels, houses, and ceremonial objects. The roots and bark were used for baskets, bowls, ropes, clothing, blankets, and rings.

32 **Dawn Redwood** *Metasequoia glyptostroboides*

Native to China. This is a young specimen of a large tree. Until 1943 this tree was only known from fossils. Then, samples were collected from an unidentified tree in Hubei province, which belonged to a tree yet unknown to science, but World War II postponed further study. It wasn't until 1946 that anyone connected the living samples with the fossils. In 1948 the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University funded an expedition to collect seeds and, soon after, distributed seeds and seedlings to various universities and arboreta worldwide. Since its discovery, the dawn redwood has become something of a national point of pride, and it is protected under Chinese law.

33 **Silver Fir** *Abies alba*

Native to the mountains of Europe. A resinous essential oil can be extracted, which has soothing qualities, and is used in perfumes, bath products, and aerosol inhalants. The branches (leaves, bark and wood) were used for production of spruce beer.

34 **Cappadocian Maple** *Acer Cappadocia*

Native to Asia. It has no commercial use and is grown as an ornamental tree in Europe.

35 **Norway Maple** *Acer platanoides*

Native to Europe. The timber is used for furniture, flooring and musical instruments. Many Stradivarius and other older Italian violins are suspected to have been constructed from Norway maple.

36 **Coast Redwood** *Sequoia sempervirens Cantab*

Native to California this is the world's tallest tree, although Cantab is an ornamental form which first occurred in the Cambridge University Botanic Garden in 1977. There is an attractive blue underside to the leaves. It does not grow to the huge proportions of its cousins.

37 **Willow-leaved Pear or Silver Pear** *Pyrus salicifolia*

Native to Asia Minor and South-West Russia. Introduced to Britain in about 1780. A small, decorative tree with fine silver-grey foliage and white blossom. Its finely-grained wood is used inlays and to make small, turned items. The first instance of the rhyme 'I had a little nut tree' was printed in London in 1797 and mentions the pear. "I had a little nut tree, Nothing would it bear, But a golden nutmeg and a silver pear."

38 **Sweet Gum** *Liquidamber styraciflua*

Discovered in North America by Spanish naturalist Fernando Hernandez, who described the sweet gum that can be obtained from the tree as resembling 'liquid amber', hence the name. It was introduced into the UK in 1681 by John Banister, the missionary collector sent out to the north American colonies by the Bishop of London Compton, who first planted it in the palace gardens at Fulham. Very tall, growing with five-point leaves and good autumn colour, and spikey fruit. The scented resin obtained from the bark is used commercially in cleaning products and in medicine. The timber is used in cabinet making, where it is known as Satinwood.

39 **Deodar** *Cedrus deodora*

Native to California, USA. An evergreen, one of the largest trees in the world. It can live up to 3,200 years in its native habitat. On its introduction to Britain in 1853, the species was named Wellingtonia gigantea after the recently deceased Duke of Wellington, however, this

name is no longer used. It has distinctive spongy red bark, and the leaves are small and scale-like. Male and female cones are borne on the same tree, and are tiny in relation to the tree as a whole. The cones take at least two years to ripen; however the cones can remain green and unopened for up to 20 years.