

## F

**Fagus**  
Fagaceae. Beech.

**F. sylvatica 'Birr Zebra'**

No previously published description traced; mature leaves with pale yellow-green bands between the lateral veins which remain dark green; the effect is only obvious at close quarters; from a distance the tree looks quite normal.

**Origin:** this is a clone propagated from a tree growing at Birr Castle, Co. Offaly, which was planted by the late Earl of Rosse perhaps about 1970. The tree has been informally called the "zebra beech" at Birr for at least a decade.

This plant has been propagated by Michael Taylor, Endsleigh Gardens, Milton Abbot, Devon, and has been commercially available since the mid-1990s under the name 'Birr Zebra'.

It is possible that this is not a new cultivar; Elwes & Henry (1906) refer to several beech cultivars with striped leaves.

**refs:** Earl of Rosse (*in litt.* 6 February 1998); M. Taylor (*in litt.* January 1998); Elwes & Henry, *Trees of Great Britain & Ireland I* (1906), 10; *The RHS plant finder 1995-1996*

**F. sylvatica 'Doneraile Purple'**

**syn:** *F. sylvatica* 'Donerade' (orthographic error).

No unpublished description traced; mature leaves purple.

**Origin:** this evidently came from Doneraile, Co. Cork. There are trees in the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, and the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh. The latter was tree (acc. no. 19661225) was acquired from Messrs George Jackman of Woking, Surrey, on 28 March 1966.

**refs:** P. Trehane (*pers. comm.* October 1998); Dr C. Alexander (*in litt.* October 1998); Dönig (1994).

**F. sylvatica var. tortuosa**

Parasol beeches. Umbrella-shaped trees, 6-8ft in height and about twice that in diameter, branches arching.

**Origin:** The original trees grows in front of Parkanaur House, Castlecaufield, Co. Tyrone.

Near to Parkanaur, in Tyrone, the residence of Mr J. Burgess, stand 2 beeches, which at a short distance resemble heaps of leaves more than trees. They were found in the woods 60 years since [c. 1825], and are from 6 feet to 8 feet in height and 15 feet diameter, and of dense drooping habit. Upon creeping inside, I found them to branch off at 2 feet or 3 feet from the ground, where one was nearly 5 feet in circumferences. The arms of branches are not unlike cork screws. The inferior branches and matted rubbish, if cleared out, would certainly improve their appearance, as the singular growth would then be visible. They might, if sent out, become a valuable adjunct to the upright yew ...'. (C. L., *Woods & forests* (January 1885))

The two trees have never been propagated as far as is known.

**refs:** Elwes & Henry, *Trees of Great Britain & Ireland I* (1906), 10; Nelson & Walsh, *Trees of Ireland* (1993), 111, 234

**F. sylvatica f. pendula (Irish variant)**

Elegant trees with long weeping branches which hang vertically and form curtains.

**Origin:** it is not known whether this arose in Ireland, but it is a distinctive plant. Seen at their best, as for example at Florencecourt, Co. Fermanagh, the trees cascade gracefully. However this Irish variant does not seem to have a name.

**refs:** *Ir. garden 2* (2) (March-April 1993): 11; Nelson & Walsh, *Trees of Ireland* (1993), 111.

**Fallopia**

Polygonaceae. Japanese knotweeds.

**F. japonica var. compacta 'Midas'**

Foliage golden, maintaining the bright colour for most of the season and never quite becoming green.

**Origin:** 'I am fairly certain it was a seedling in the garden'. Named and introduced by Gary Dunlop, Ballyrogan Nurseries, Newtownards, Co. Down. As Gary Dunlop remarked, this is an apt, but ironic name, for a plant that comes from an invasive weed.

**refs:** G. Dunlop (*in litt.* 3 April 1998); *Ballyrogan Nurseries plant list 1998* [without description].

**Ferocactus**

Cactaceae

See sub-section Cacti

**Fittonia**

Acanthaceae. Nerve plant.

*There are very few genera name after Irish women - Hutchinsia is the only other one that I know about. Fittonia was named in honour of the sisters Elizabeth and Sarah Mary Fitton, who wrote Conversations on botany, one of those pocketable little books designed to 'enable children and young persons to acquire a knowledge of the vegetable productions of their native country, by introducing to them, in a familiar manner, the principles of the Linnaean system of botany.'* The book went through no fewer than nine editions between 1817 and 1840.

*The Fitton sisters were not 'of very original mind', according to Fussell (1951), yet they possessed 'that deep tincture of piety that all of these ladies owned in an age somewhat given to riot and ribaldry.'*

*Very little is known about the sisters. I am sure that they were sisters of the eminent geologist William Henry Fitton; we know that when he moved to Northampton in England his mother and three sisters kept house for him. At least one sister was a keen amateur botanist, known to have collected plants particularly the Killarney fern at Powerscourt Waterfall with Dr Whitley Stokes. Not surprisingly, they knew Maria Edgeworth.*

*Sarah Mary Fitton also wrote The four seasons; a short account of the structure of plants published in London in 1865.*

*Despite their relative obscurity, Henri Eugène Lucien Gaëtan Coemans decided to coin Fittonia in their honour, publishing it as the name for a small genus from South America, related to Acanthus.*

**F. verschaffeltii**

Creeping perennial herb, with oval leaves in opposite pairs, beautifully veined with red or white (*F. verschaffeltii* var. *argyroneura*); tender, grown indoors as a house-plant.

**Origin:** A Peruvian plant familiar as a house-plant.

**refs:** Coemans, *Flore de serres 15* (1862): 185-186; Praeger, *Some Irish naturalists (1950)*, 79; Fussell, 'Elizabeth and Sarah Mary Fitton', *Gard. chron. 130* (10 November 1951): 179-181.



**Forsythia**  
Oleaceae.

*F. x intermedia* 'Lynwood Variety'

syn: *F. x intermedia spectabilis* 'Splendens'; *F. x intermedia* 'Lynwood'; *F. x intermedia* 'Lynwood Gold'

'Very similar in growth to *F. intermedia spectabilis*, ... differs in its flowers which are more perfectly formed and broader petalled'; 'flowers broader petalled and well formed.'

Origin: from Miss Nora Adair, Lynwood, Cookstown, Co. Tyrone; introduced by Slieve Donard Nursery, Newcastle, Co. Down. This cultivar was first marketed in 1946 under the name 'Splendens', but in 1948 the name was altered by the Slieve Donard Nursery to 'Lynwood Variety' which should be accepted as the correct name. Shortening the name to 'Lynwood' is contrary to the rules of nomenclature.

A branch sport on 'Spectabilis' was noticed by Miss Adair who allowed the Slieve Donard Nursery to have cuttings in return for a bag of daffodil bulbs in 1933. The original bush was growing beside the window of the dining-room at Lynwood. Miss Adair died in 1967.

Leslie Slinger advised that this was 'undoubtedly the finest Forsythia, bearing large, perfectly formed flowers on a compact plant attaining about six feet. Be sure each Spring after flowering to remove entirely the flowering branches.'

This cultivar was subjected to a "cultivar selection scheme" at East Malling in the early 1980s! As a result a clone was "selected" as representing the finest form, but it is not necessarily the true Irish plants. This dubious clone is marketed as 'Lynwood' LA '79.

awards: AM 1956, AGM (RHS)

refs: Walsh, Ross & Nelson, *An Irish florilegium* (1983), 141; Nelson, *An Irish flower garden* (1984), 114-114; —, *An Irish flower garden replanted* (1997), 146-147; de Bree, 'Forsythia', *Dendroflora* 28 (1991), 27-47; Nelson & Deane, 'Glory of Donard' (1993), 68-69.

illustr: *An Irish florilegium* (1983) plate 28; Phillips & Rix (1989), 42; *Dendroflora* 28 (1991), 2; Nelson & Deane, 'Glory of Donard' (1993), plate 5.

*Fragaria*

Rosaceae. Strawberry.

*F. x ananassa* 'Clonard'

Fruits larger than 'Clonderg (the largest picked in 1982), dark red, firm; late season.

Origin: raised at An Foras Taluntais Soft Fruit Research Centre, Clonroche, Co. Wexford. 'Clonard' (CL 205) came from 'Domanil' pollinated by 'Cambridge Vigour'. Since the 1970s at the Soft Fruit Research Centre established by An Foras Taluntais in Clonroche, Co. Wexford, a breeding programme has been carried out involving strawberries. The aim is not to produce strawberry cultivars for use by ordinary gardeners, but to breed better strawberries for the Irish processing industry, especially ones with better fruit colour, with good red flesh.

Work continues at Clonroche, evaluating some later selections which arose from native Irish breeding material. Time alone will tell if an Irish strawberry becomes available to commercial growers and ordinary gardens.

refs: J. MacLachlan (in litt. 18 November 1996); — 'Three new strawberry cultivars being prepared for release', *Farm & food research* 14 (1) (February 1983): 24-25; Nelson, *An Irish flower garden replanted* (1997), 230-232.

illustr: *Farm & food research* 14 (1) (February 1983): 25.

*F. x ananassa* 'Clonderg'

Fruits small to medium-sized; shape regular, conical; very dark red (brighter and clearer than 'Senga Sengana'), very good flavour; susceptible to red core disease; growth vigorous and upright, yield heavy; winter dormant.

Origin: raised at An Foras Taluntais Soft Fruit Research Centre, Clonroche, Co. Wexford. 'Clonderg', the first to be named, was the progeny of 'Senga Sengana' pollinated by 'Cambridge Vigour'.

refs: MacLachlan, 'Clonderg: a new strawberry for processing', *Farm and food research* 12 (6) (December 1981): 183; — 'Three new strawberry cultivars being prepared for release', *Farm & food research* 14 (1) (February 1983): 24-25.

illustrs: *Farm & food research* 12 (6) (December 1981): 183; — 14 (1) (February 1983): 25.

*F. x ananassa* 'Clonree'

Fruits larger than 'Clonderg', variable in size, shape regular, conical, dark red, firm; mid-season.

Origin: raised at An Foras Taluntais Soft Fruit Research Centre, Clonroche, Co. Wexford.

'Clonree' (CL 2), raised from open-pollinated 'Cambridge Favourite', was Jim MacLachlan's favourite among the strawberries he named, and he hoped that it and 'Clonard' would be dual-purpose strawberries, but none of the varieties was a success.

refs: MacLachlan, 'Three new strawberry cultivars being prepared for release', *Farm & food research* 14 (1) (February 1983): 24-25.

illustr: *Farm & food research* 14 (1) (February 1983): 25.

*F. x ananassa* 'Princess Frederick William'

'The flavour and perfume of the fruit peculiarly delicious; its colour scarlet; plant very healthy and a good bearer; first-rate as an extra early fruit.'; fruit bright scarlet, 'of a rich Pine Apple perfume and flavour; berries averaging from 3 to 5 inches round; calyx leafy; foliage deeply serrate; distinct and very hardy.'

Origin: The only antique strawberry known from Ireland, raised by Ninian Niven at The Garden Farm, Drumcondra, Dublin, and described in *The gardeners' chronicle*, on 11 February 1860, as a 'first rate seedling strawberry ... which for two seasons past gave ripe fruit out of doors on the 29th May.' W. Nicholson, a strawberry specialist, approved — 'this will soon prove itself to be one of the very best out-door and forcing sorts ever. 1980 introduced'.<sup>1</sup>

refs: *Gard. chron.* (20 August 1859), 693<sup>1</sup>; — (11 February 1860), 118<sup>2</sup>; Nelson, *An Irish flower garden replanted* (1997), 230.



## Francoa

Saxifragaceae. Bridal wreath.

## 'Ballyrogan'

Large robust plant, flowers purple.

Origin: a hybrid seedling from *F. appendiculata* crossed with Rogerson's form of *F. sonchifolia*, raised, selected and named by Gary Dunlop, Ballyrogan Nurseries, Newtownards, Co. Down. This has 'the size and robustness of the [first] parent, with the flower colouring of the latter.'

refs: G. Dunlop (in litt. 25 January 1998); Ballyrogan Nurseries plant list 1997 [without description].



Fraxinus  
Oleaceae. Ash.

*F. excelsior* var. *heterophylla* 'Variegata'

Shrubby tree; foliage variegated; leaves with a single leaflet (not as in ordinary ash), variegated with white yellow and light green.

Origin: Eglantine, Hillsborough, Co. Down.

The variegated various-leaved ash, was discovered, in 1830, in the grounds of Captain Moore of Eglantine, near Hillsborough ... The variegation appeared in summer, on the point of one of the shoots of a tree of 15 years... Moore marked it, and had the portion of the shoot which showed the variegated leaves taken off, and grafted the following spring. ... The habit of this kind of ash, we are informed, is much more that of a shrub than of a tree; and a number of plants of it have been propagated by Mr. [Henry] Davis of the Ogle's Grove Nursery, who sells them at one guinea each.

An earlier report, the basis for the entry in J. C. Loudon's *Arboretum & fruticetum Britannicum*, read

A variegated simple-leaved Ash has been discovered, and propagated for sale, by Mr. Henry Davies, Ogle's Grove Nursery ... The variegation is white and yellow, with very dark, and also with light, green; and it does not seem to be attended with that ragged and imperfectly developed appearance of the leaf common to most variegations.

Loudon (1844) commented that

The circumstance of the parent plant having never shown any symptom of variegation since 1830, while all the scions taken from the variegated shoot have continued variegated, shows the great importance of taking advantage of every sport, or deviation from the usual form in tress, when the object is the increase the number of varieties.

This is no longer in cultivation, as far as I can tell.  
refs: Loudon's *gard. mag.* 12 (1836): 371-372; Loudon, *Arboretum & fruticetum Britannicum* 2 (1844), 1229; Elwes & Henry, *Trees of GB & Ireland III* (1909), 866.  
illustr: Loudon's *gard. mag.* 12 (1836): 372; Loudon, *Arboretum & fruticetum Britannicum* 2 (1844), 1229, fig. 1051.

*F. excelsior*

The Cockscomb ash; shoots fasciated and contorted into extraordinary shapes.

Origin: I am not sure whether this weird plant originated in Ireland, but William Gumbleton provided the following account:

I was much struck with the extraordinary appearance of a very fine and well-grown specimen of that most curious and rare tree, the Cockscomb Ash, which I had never before seen, and of a branch of which the accompanying woodcut gives an accurate and faithful representation. The tree was purchased about forty years ago [i.e. c. 1840] when about 1 ft. high from an Irish nurseryman, and is grafted on the common Ash. Its present height is 10 ft. 9 in., girth of stem at the junction of the graft, 22 in., and the circumference of the branches, 34 ft. It was moved to its present position when about 4 ft. high, and is growing in rich, deep well-drained loam.

Gumbleton did not name the garden, stating merely that he had been 'recently examining a very interesting collection of hardy shrubs belonging to a fiend in the Co.

of Wicklow ...' - I suspect that the garden was Thomas Acton's at Kilmacurragh.

ref: Gumbleton, 'Remarkable hardy shrubs in Wicklow', *The garden* 11 (5 May 1877): 364.

illustr: *The garden* 11 (5 May 1877): 364.

*F. excelsior* [not named]

Instead of the leaves and buds being opposite, these are spirally arranged and alternate.

Origin: observed at Navan, Co. Meath, by A. D.

Richardson, on the banks of the River Boyne.

refs: *Gard. chron.* 36 (1904): 133; Elwes & Henry, *Trees of GB & Ireland III* (1909), 865.

illustr: *Gard. chron.* 36 (1904): 133, fig 55.



## Fuchsia

## Onagraceae.

*F. magellanica* var. *macrostemma* 'Recurvata'

syn: *Fuchsia macrostemma* 'Recurvata'

Flowers with 4 slender, red, recurved sepals, petals purple; branches arching and drooping.

Origin: raised by Ninian Niven during the time he was gardener at the Chief Secretary's Lodge in The Phoenix Park, Dublin. This fuchsia is probably no longer in cultivation.

refs: *Curtis's bot. mag.* 63 (1836), plate 3521; *Ir. farmer's & gard. magazine* 1 (1834): 139.

illustrs: *Curtis's bot. mag.* 63 (1836), plate 3521 (reproduced in monotone in Nelson & McCracken, 'The brightest jewel' (1987), 84); *Ir. farmer's & gard. magazine* 1 (1834): 139.

## 'Mount Stewart'

Flowers with 4 red sepals and 'double' corona of purple petals.

Origin: from Mount Stewart, Greyabbey, Co. Down, although this was only the place where Graham Thomas noticed it. This cultivar is most unlikely to have been raised at Mount Stewart and perhaps already had a (lost!) cultivar name.

refs: Thomas, *Gardens of the National Trust* (1979), plate 15.  
illustr: *Gardens of the National Trust* (1979), plate 15.

