



Tree/Shrub of the month:

Bay— *Larus nobilis*. This useful evergreen tree (it can grow up to 20—40ft, sometimes more) is adaptable to many different aspects and soils, including pots. It will take hard pruning as you can see in the photos. It is a native of the Mediterranean and is extensively used in European gardens, standing up well in the summer heat and low rainfall.



Website: the website has had a revamp - please have a look.

Native Trees

I recently read an old Arboriculture Research Note by the late Alan Mitchell about native trees in Britain. In the article he says after the last ice age and formation of the English Channel there were only 33 tree species in Britain: common juniper, downy birch, silver birch, aspen, Scots pine, bay willow, common alder, hazel, small leaved lime, bird cherry, goat willow, wych elm, rowan, sessile oak, ash,

ple, wild service tree, large-leaved lime, beech, hornbeam and box.



Above: remnants of the Caledonian forest—native Scots pine.

When the ice retreated it left the land without any trees. Before the English Channel formed, a period of about 5000 years, some trees migrated from the south. At this time early tribes may also have introduced new trees, possibly bringing easily propagated trees to plant for fuel and food. Alan Mitchell speculates that the two species in this category are white and grey poplar as they fit distribution patterns around centres of populated areas but not remote woods and wild places. Later settlers coming into a wooded country may have brought in fruit trees from the south such as pear and medlar. It is believed that the English elm was brought in by Iron Age tribes as it was of great value for fodder for cattle. By 1600 man was responsible for another 30, some dating back to Roman times. After 1600 many trees were introduced from the Eastern USA and



Black poplar

Wild service tree



Crack willow

Rowan

holly, common oak, hawthorn, crack willow, black poplar, yew, whitebeam, midland thorn, crab apple, wild cherry, strawberry tree, white willow, field ma-

Mediterranean, such as common lime, horse chestnut, tulip tree, Norway maple and grey alder. The first western USA introductions came in 1827 sent by David Douglas and include Douglas fir, sugar pine, western yellow pine followed later by sitka spruce, big cone pine, Monterey pine, grand fir and noble fir. Veitch's nursery in Exeter sent out plant hunters to introduce new species. William Lobb sent back the monkey puzzle and the giant redwood, although Archibald Menzies brought the first seed back to Joseph Banks at Kew in 1795. The monkey puzzle avenue at Bicton was planted in 1843 / 4 from plants supplied by Veitch.



It was 1861 that the first major influx of plants from Japan arrived with a long wait until 1900 before the vast additions came from China—Ernest Wilson, George Forrest and Joseph Rock being the best known plant hunters of that time. The dawn redwood was discovered in central China in 1941 and brought to the UK in 1948. The Wollemi pine was discovered in 1994 in temperate rainforest in New South Wales—in 1997 two plants were given to Kew gardens with a further batch being sent in 2005 <https://www.kew.org/read-and-watch/uk-first-wollemi-pines>.

In conclusion the only true native species can only refer to those trees that found their way to the UK by themselves ie the first 33 species mentioned. However, the Forestry Commission are recommending planting a wide variety of species in the hope that some will tolerate the conditions thrown up as a result of climate change.

Monkey puzzle dismantle and fell:

Over the last few days we have been taking down a monkey puzzle that had been infected with honey fungus—these trees are prone to this disease, unfor-

tunately. The first job was to involve Western Power to shroud the power lines beneath the tree. We then used the MEWP—mobile elevating work platform—to aid in the dismantling. The branches were stripped off.



Then it was a matter of carefully lowering down the pole in sections—the wood is surprisingly heavy—chipping up the brushwood. Removing the



chips, logs and tidying up.

