

INTERNATIONAL TREE CONSERVATION IN OUR GARDENS

We are delighted to inform Feuars that we have been gifted specimens of eight species of more or less endangered conifers; of these the Atlantic Cedar (*Cedrus atlantica*) has been planted in place of the venerable and much-loved elm that was lost to the Moray Place Garden about six years ago. The remaining seven are being placed in the Bank Garden and the Doune Terrace strip.

Since 1991 the International Conifer Conservation Programme ("ICCP") has been based at the Royal Botanic Gardens in Edinburgh ("RBGE") and run by Martin Gardner MBE. It combines taxonomic, conservation, genetic and horticultural research with international capacity building to further conifer conservation. There has been work in more than 50 countries around the world, focussing on Chile, New Caledonia, Lao PDR, Vietnam, China and other parts of Southeast Asia.

One aspect has been to plant thousands of specimens of endangered species in hundreds of 'refuges' across the British Isles where they are monitored. There is interest on how such trees fare in urban settings. These trees are welcome additions to the Moray Feu gardens, being quite different to those which we have. They will enhance the biodiversity in the garden and gives Feuars the opportunity to assist and support very important international conservation work.

The eight trees are:

Atlantic Cedar (*Cedrus atlantica*)

From the Atlas Mountains, Morocco which has a broadly conical habit and grows to about 35m. Conservation status: Endangered through habitat loss, climate change, felling, and activities of goats.

Tibetan cypress (*Cupressus gigantea*)

A medium sized tree which has a columnar habit and grows to about 10 m tall. It is a high-altitude Himalayan fir. Conservation status: Vulnerable.

Serbian Spruce (*Picea omorika*)

Serbian spruce has a very narrow pencil-like habit to about 10 m tall. Conservation status: Endangered.

Japanese Spruce (*Picea koyamae*)

This is one of the world's most threatened species from the Yatsugatake Mountains of Japan. A plant at RBGE is about 15m tall after 40 years. Conservation status: Critically endangered.

Dalmatian Black Pine (*Pinus nigra* (subspecies) *dalmatica*)

This is a smaller form of the Black pine which grows along the Dalmatian coast. It attains a height of about 8 m. Conservation status: Endangered.

Himalayan Fir (*Abies spectabilis*)

This is a very attractive Himalayan fir with upright blue cones. Afghanistan to Nepal. Conservation status: Near threatened.

Japanese Silver Fir (*Abies veitchii* var *sikokiana*)

This is a high-altitude form which has a smaller stature to 10 m. Again, it has very attractive upright blue cones. Conservation status: Least threatened.

Patagonian Cypress (*Fitzroya cupressoides*)

Southern Chile and Patagonia. Conservation status: Endangered

The ICCP has readily accessible information online, and welcomes interest and support from the public.

We would like to remind you of the successful introduction of trees of three species of *Sorbus* endemic to a single location on the Isle of Arran, also gifted to us by RBGE. These species, *S. arranensis*, *S. pseudofennica* and *S. pseudomeinichii*, can be found thriving in the Doune Terrace strip.