

TULLYNALLY TREE TRAIL

1. Common Beech – *Fagus sylvatica* ON LEFT OF MAIN PATH, 30 Metres below

The beech has adapted itself brilliantly to Ireland (though technically naturalised rather than native, as it was introduced by man from Britain hundreds of years ago). Many specimens here are of exceptional size, and some of their progeny have been planted below this 200 year old giant.

2. Tulip Tree – *Liriodendron chinensis* BELOW MAIN PATH ON LEFT, 30 Metres below

The American tulip tree caused a sensation in the 17th century when it was introduced from eastern America to Britain and Ireland. It grows almost as fast as a poplar (hence the Americans call it a 'tulip poplar'). The Chinese version here was first introduced to Europe in 1901, after it was recorded by Augustine Henry, the Irish plant explorer. The leaves are even more narrow-waisted than those of the American species, but the flowers are smaller and less colourful.

3. Western Red Cedar – *Thuja plicata* ON LEFT OF MAIN PATH, opp. Grotto turn off

Builders value this aromatic red, durable wood from western America. Like many species, the red cedar can multiply itself from *layers* - branches that have touched the ground and taken root. This specimen was planted about 1870 and has formed a natural forest from concentric circles of branches.

4. Cut-leaved Beech – *Fagus sylvatica asplenifolia* ON RIGHT OF MAIN PATH, after Grotto turn off

The cut- or fern-leaved beech is a 'sport' (mutation) of the common beech, discovered in the late 18th century and later a very fashionable tree in Regency and Victorian gardens. This one was probably planted about 1820. Note how the leaves revert in places to the common beech, so you have two different forms of leaf.

5. Monterey Cypress – *Cupressus macrocarpa* ON LEFT OF MAIN PATH

This species of cypress is the fastest growing (and one of the toughest) of all the cypresses that have been introduced to Britain and Ireland in the last three centuries. This specimen was growing in a flower pot in Castlepollard as late as 1939. Paradoxically it grows much better here than in its native Monterey, California, where it is a stunted bush.

6. Red Maple – *Acer rubrum* CONTINUE THRO' RED GATES, ON RIGHT OF MAIN PATH

The red maple from eastern America was introduced into Britain and Ireland in the 17th century. It is famous for its maroon spring flowers and scarlet autumn leaves. This one was planted about 90 years ago, and is the largest of the collection of 40 exotic maples in the garden.

7. Irish Yew – *Taxus baccata 'Fastigiata'* CONTINUE TO YEW AVENUE 'F' ON MAP

Ireland has given relatively few plants to the world of gardening and botany. But the Irish yew - an upright version of the common yew that occurred as a freak of nature in County Fermanagh about 1760 - has been cloned and planted all over the world. Every twig in every branch insists on being upright.

8. Japanese Cedar – *Crytomeria japonica* RETRACE STEPS to Upper Lake sign, TURN RIGHT, ON LEFT OF PATH

There are two kinds of Japanese cedar commonly planted in gardens: the species itself, the main forest tree of Japan, and a garden variety called *elegans* introduced from Japan in 1861. This grows into a huge sprawling bush distinguished by its soft foliage, green in summer and bronze in winter.

9. Magnolia – *Magnolia x loebneri* ON RIGHT OF PATH BEFORE QUEEN VICTORIA'S HUT 'H'

Of all the hundreds of magnolias from Asia that flower on bare branches in March and April, this hybrid is one of the toughest and most elegant. It is a cross between two Japanese magnolias: *M. kobus* and *M. stellata*. There are two forms of hybrid here, one white and one pink, and behind is *M. kobus*.

10. Wellingtonia – *Sequoiadendron giganteum* ON LEFT OF QUEEN VICTORIA'S HUT 'H'

In 1853 British plant explorer, William Lobb, brought back from California seeds from a newly discovered giant. In Britain they called it after a British (and Irish) political giant, the Duke of Wellington, who had died the previous year. The Americans called it after Sequoiah, a half Cherokee trader. Old trees in California are the biggest living things in the world. This is only a baby planted in 1976.

11. Common oak – *Quercus robur* OPPOSITE No.9, ACROSS PATH

The Greeks and Romans admired the common oak above all other trees in the ancient world. It was Jupiter's tree: the father of the forest. Native in Ireland too, it grows to a huge size and lives to an enormous age. This young specimen has been bred from the tallest in the demesne, the 'Squire's Walking Stick', which you can see on the left of the main avenue on the way out.

12. Cedar of Lebanon – *Cedrus libani* CONTINUE TO UPPER LAKE: ABOVE PATH ON LEFT

This is the biblical cedar used by King Solomon to build his temple. The species (one of three cedars that will grow here) grows rapidly and makes a flat-topped mountain of a tree. The flatness makes it very vulnerable to snow. Our own one was planted about 1870 and lost a huge branch in a snowstorm a few years ago.

13. Copper Beech – *Fagus sylvatica "Purpurea"* MIDWAY ALONG BANK OF UPPER LAKE

People either love the copper beech or loathe it for its bold colours - pink in spring, purple in summer, copper in autumn - it's a 'sport' (mutation) of the common beech, believed to have occurred in Germany in the C18th.

14. Common Lime – *Tilia x europaea* ON RIGHT OF UPPER LAKE IN WIDE CLEARING

The common lime is a fine example of what scientists call 'hybrid vigour'. It is a natural hybrid of two European species of lime, the large-leaved one and the small-leaved one. It grows faster than either. Unfortunately it tends to produce a disfiguring crop of whiskers and needs a regular shave at the base.

15. Fossil- tree – *Metasequoia glyptostroboides* CONTINUE ROUND UPPER LAKE TO SOUTH BANK

This one of the two 'fossil trees' discovered by plant hunters in the 20th century (the other is the Wollemi Pine found in Australia in 1994). The 60-million year old fossil was christened *Metasequoia* in 1941. The same year the tree was found alive and well in a remote valley in western China by a young Chinese forester. This tree is only 30 years old.

16. Weeping Willow – *Salix chrysocoma* SOUTH BANK OF UPPER LAKE, just beyond turn to Forest Walk

A mysterious hybrid apparently derived from the white willow, the weeping willow is admirably suited to the banks of a pond. But its leaves are liable to be disfigured by anthracnose. In cities, sulphur pollution keeps the leaves healthy.

17. Ash – *Fraxinus excelsior* FOLLOW PATH SOUTH TO TOP FOREST WALK, ON LEFT OF PATH (10 metres)

At 100 foot high, this is Tullynally's tallest ash. When young, ash timber is white and springy. Hence its use for spade handles and hurley sticks. By contrast 200 year old trees like this one tend to have an elegant, dark wood with wonderful waved markings - perfect for cabinet making.

18. Lawson's Cypress – *Chamaecyparis lawsoniana* ON LEFT OF TOP FOREST WALK PATH

Introduced in mid-nineteenth century from north-west America, the Lawson cypress takes its name from a famous Scottish firm of nurserymen.. In Britain it now comes in all shapes and sizes: squat and columnar, yellow, green, blue.

19. Horse Chestnut – *Aesculus hippocastanum* OPPOSITE PAGODA 'L' IN FOREST WALK

Sadly now dead. This species was introduced here early in the 17th century and is from Albania.

20. Lucombe Oak - *Quercus x hispanica 'Lucombeana'* ON LEFT OF FOREST PATH BEFORE 'M'

A chance hybrid between two very different oaks - the deciduous Turkey oak and the evergreen cork oak - the Lucombe oak has the best of both worlds. It is big and tough like the Turkey oak, but also elegant, like the cork oak. And, as a happy compromise between its conflicting heritage, it is evergreen for half the winter.

21. Caucasian Fir - *abies nordmanniana* ON LEFT OF GINGERBREAD HOUSE 'M'

Like many trees from the Caucasus, this oriental silver fir seems to be an improved version of the European silver fir. The leaves are greener, the red male 'flowers' are more numerous in spring, the branches sweep closer to the ground and instead of a head like an old lavatory brush, it keeps a noble head of hair in old age.

22. Scots Pine – *Pinus sylvestris* FACING GINGERBREAD HOUSE 'M'

Once native to Ireland, the Scots pine mysteriously died out 2,000 years ago in all parts of these islands except the wildest mountains of Scotland. Re-introduced from there to Ireland, it is now the most elegant and long-lived of all the 500 pines we can grow, easily recognised by its pink trunk.

23. Japanese Maple – *Acer palmatum 'Osakazuki'* RETRACE STEPS TO STEEP PATH ABOVE UP. LAKE, on left. Combining toughness with grace, this garden variety of the Japanese maple was bred in Japan more than a century ago. Lobster-pink in spring, in autumn a dazzling scarlet. The botanical name 'palmatum' refers to the way the leaves are divided into five lobes resembling human fingers.

24. Common Yew – *Taxus baccata* ON RIGHT OF STEEP PATH BACK TO START AT RED GATE

One of Ireland's two native conifers (the other is the common juniper, usually a mere bush) the yew is longest lived of any species that will grow in Ireland. Specimens are believed to live well over 1,000 years. This one is only about 200 years old. Notice the characteristic fluting on the trunk - like Gothic architecture.