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978-1-107-50482-0 - Descriptive Labels for Botanic Gardens
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*Family* Cyatheaceae

## DICKSONIA ANTARCTICA *Labill.*

Native of Australia and Tasmania. A very closely allied species, *D. fibrosa* Col., is endemic in New Zealand. Like many members of the *Cyatheaceae* it is a "tree fern" with an erect stem, which attains 50 feet in height, surmounted by a crown of graceful fronds. Notice the dense mantle of adventitious roots enwrapping the stem. There is a herbaceous species of *Dicksonia*, *D. apiifolia* Hook., growing in the Corridor nearly opposite the Palm House door. Tree Ferns affect warm and moist localities, and are very abundant in northern South America, the Monsoon Region, East Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific Islands; in New Zealand they grow close to the Tasman Glacier.



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*Family* Polypodiaceae

ACROSTICHUM AUREUM *L.*

Native of the tropics of both old and new worlds, where it inhabits the shores of tidal estuaries and backwaters, often covering great areas of the brackish mud flats at some distance from the sea. It is the only living fern which can tolerate appreciable quantities of common salt in the soil water. The bright golden yellow of the young pinnae gives the plant its trivial name (Lat. *aureus*, golden). The upper pinnae of the frond are alone fertile; their lower surfaces are completely covered by sporangia. From among the bases of the fronds clusters of roots descend, and enter the mud. This species has many features of anatomical interest, and in several respects resembles other members of the "mangrove vegetation."



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*Family* Osmundaceae

TODEA BARBARA *Moore*

Native of South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand. The root-mantled stem tends to grow erect, and in Australian specimens it may weigh as much as a ton and a half. The Cambridge plant is one of the finest specimens in cultivation. The stem, which in the closely allied genus *Leptopteris* is much more slender, gives the plant the aspect of a "tree fern." The great majority of tree ferns belong to the family *Cyatheaceae* (cf. *Dicksonia antarctica*). The only other genus of *Osmundaceae*, besides the two already mentioned, is *Osmunda*, which includes our Royal Fern (*O. regalis* L.). *Osmundaceae* is one of the most ancient families of ferns.

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*Family* Pinaceae

## ARAUCARIA EXCELSA *R.Br.*

### Norfolk Island Pine

Native of Norfolk Island (930 miles off the east coast of Australia): introduced into England in 1793 by Sir Joseph Banks. It is much planted in the warmer parts of the world as an ornamental tree, and its straight stems bearing very regular whorls, usually of five branches, are familiar to visitors to the Riviera, Madeira, Canary Islands, and other places. It is not hardy in Britain, but is very commonly grown as a pot plant. The timber is useful, especially for ship-building. Araucarian foliage-shoots and cones closely allied to those of the Norfolk Island Pine occur in the Jurassic rocks of Yorkshire and in many other parts of Europe. The genus *Araucaria* persisted in Europe to the Tertiary epoch, but is now confined to the southern hemisphere.



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## PICEA EXCELSA *Link*

### Common Spruce, Norway Spruce

Native of Central and Northern Europe, but not of Britain. Its remains have been found in English pre-glacial deposits as, for example, the forest bed at Cromer, but not in later deposits. It is very extensively planted on the Continent. Large supplies of the timber ("white deal") come to us from Norway, where the trees grow slowly and make comparatively hard wood. In Germany it is called *Fichte*, and it is the common "Christmas tree" of that country. Burgundy Pitch (*Pix Burgundica*), no longer in the British Pharmacopoeia, is the resinous exudation from the stem. It was formerly much used as a basis for plasters. The cone-like galls usually seen on the Spruce are caused by the insect *Chermes abietis*. The real cones are long and pendulous.



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## PINUS CEMBRA *L.*

### Arolla Pine

Native of the Alps of Central Europe, where it grows at an altitude of 5–8000 feet, and of Siberia, where it covers large tracts of country at a much lower level. The seeds, known as "pine kernels," are good to eat, and in Siberia thousands of tons of them are collected annually. This species and *P. peuke* Gris., the Macedonian Pine (which has green, glabrous shoots), are the only 5-needled pines in Europe. The Arolla pine is known among other 5-needled pines commonly cultivated in this country by its shaggy young shoots. The closely allied *P. koraiensis* Sieb. et Zucc. has leaves toothed up to the apex. *P. cembra* has an entire leaf-apex.



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## FITZROYA PATAGONICA *Hk. f.*

Native of West Patagonia and South Chile. This tree was discovered in 1834 during the voyage of the *Beagle*, and was named after Captain Robert Fitz-Roy, the commander of that ship. In 1849 Messrs Veitch's famous collector, William Lobb, introduced it into this country. It is quite hardy in Devonshire and Cornwall, where magnificent specimens are to be seen. Note the white lines of stomata on both upper and lower leaf-surfaces. The only other species of this genus, *F. archeri* Benth., is native of Tasmania, and is not hardy in Britain.



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## LIBOCEDRUS DECURRENS *Torr.*

### Incense Cedar

Native of Oregon and California. It is most abundant and largest on the sierras of Central California at 5-7000 feet above the sea, where it frequently attains a height of 150 feet. In 1853 it was introduced into this country, where it grows with a columnar outline like the Lombardy Poplar. In its native land, however, it forms a very irregular crown. The timber is used for various purposes, but is liable to attack by dry rot. *Libocedrus* is one of the few coniferous genera common to the N. and S. hemispheres. Of the other 7 species 2 grow in Chile, 2 in New Zealand, and 1 each in New Caledonia, New Guinea, and China.



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*Family* Hydrocharitaceae

## VALLISNERIA SPIRALIS *L.*

This plant lives rooted to the bottom of ponds in the warmer parts of the world. In deep water its submerged, ribbon-like leaves attain six feet in length. The staminate and carpellary flowers are on separate plants (dioecious). The long, spiral stalks of the carpellary flowers carry them to the surface. The staminate flowers, which arise near the base of the plant, ultimately break loose and drift about on the water till they come into contact with the large stigmas of the carpellary flowers and bring about pollination. The spiral of the carpellary flower stalk then closes and carries the ripening fruit to the bottom of the pond.



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*Family* Gramineae

ARUNDO DONAX *L.*

Native of the Mediterranean Region, where it is often planted to form hedges. This is by far the largest European grass, sometimes attaining twenty feet in height, with stems nearly an inch in diameter. On account of its great stature, and the innumerable uses of its cane-like stems, it has been called the "bamboo of Europe." It is not, however, a bamboo, but is closely related to our common reed, *Phragmites communis* Trin. (*Arundo phragmites* L.). Several words in the O.T. have been thought to signify this plant, which is common in Palestine, and it is probably the "reed (κάλαμος) shaken with the wind" of Matt. xi, 7. The widely creeping root-stocks and roots contain much starch and sugar, and are used medicinally.



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