

Chilean Flora in Ireland

A brief catalogue of Chilean native species found in Ireland



Embassy of Chile in Ireland 2022

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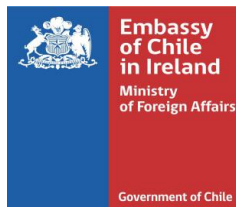


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Introduction

In the year 2022, we commemorate 30 years of the formal establishment of Diplomatic Relations between Chile and Ireland, two nations that exhibit close bilateral ties in the most diverse areas of their history, present and future, registering connections that mark Chile and Ireland as two countries that have a past that unites them and a vision that projects them as "like-minded" countries in various fields, many of them transcending the traditional ones.

The Irish diaspora and their descendants in Chile made a crucial contribution to the formation of the country at the dawn of its independence and later became an important influence on national development in the most diverse fields of endeavour, such as literature, politics, diplomacy, and the arts, just to mention a few. Surnames such as O'Higgins, O'Brien, O'Carroll, O'Ryan, Mackenna and Blest, among others, are studded with great luster and brilliance in the pages of Chilean history.

In the context of the bilateral relationship between Chile and Ireland, there are many chapters that build important links in our past. Episodes ranging from the powerful contribution of the Irish in the Independence and Chilean history, through various areas that include stories of friendly football and rugby matches; visits to the Dáil of the then Irish Free State and the presence of common flora in both countries, among others.

This part of the heritage referring to the common flora of Chile and Ireland, present in two countries close in their past and united by their bilateral relations, but geographically distant, led us to ask ourselves -as the central object of this publication- what flora, how it germinates, grows and flourishes in these lands, for example: How did the Araucaria tree arrive in Ireland?

Much of that question is graciously answered by Seamus O'Brien, in his text "Thomas Acton - a centennial celebration at Kilmacurragh", pointing out that:

“William Lobb a Cornish man, travelled to South America during the 1840s, paying special emphasis on the flora of central and southern Chile and in the 1850s he travelled to California. Acton was keen to take advantage of his garden’s almost frost-free climate and was among the first to grow Lobb’s new introductions. Many of these survive including magnificent specimens of the monkey puzzle *Araucaria araucana*”.

However, this response, far from satisfying our initial curiosity, led us to search for other Chilean species present in Ireland. Thus, we began a series of visits to Irish botanical gardens such as Kilmacurragh and Glasnevin, but also more attentive walks through the streets of Dublin.

Part of that research is outlined in this publication, where it can be seen how through the common flora present in both Chile and Ireland, a novel testimony crystallizes that reveals a lesser-known side of the deep historical ties that unite us, which exhibit deep shared roots, strengthens our bilateral relations and project it into the future from its condition of "like-minded" countries, to continue working together in order to achieve new green shoots that make bilateral relations between Ireland and Chile flourish even more.

LUMA APICULATA

Common name: Chilean Myrtle, Red Myrtle, Arrayan, Palo Colorado, Temu, Rama, Quitri, Kollimamüll or Kütri.

Evergreen tree, up to 25m high. The trunk is generally twisted and can measure up to 60cm in diameter. The bark is smooth, reddish in colour and peels off periodically, leaving whitish patches.

Additional information:

The fruit is edible, with a pleasant sweet taste, and from which a fortifying tonic and chicha are prepared. The new bark is used to dye wool pink and in popular medicine as an astringent against skin diseases, to stop hemorrhages, and in infusion it cures internal wounds, urinary tract and muscular pains. It would also have properties to alleviate stomach pains, bronchial problems, asthma and tuberculosis. The juice obtained from the woody part of the stems would serve as an anti-inflammatory, while the flower buds are used to prepare a remedy for diarrhea.

The leaves are used to flavor mate. It is of great ornamental value because of its beautifully colored trunk, striking white flowers, long flowering period and black fruit.







CRINODENDRON HOOKERIANUM

Common name: Chilean Lantern Tree, Chaquihue, Chaquihua, Chequehue, Chaquehigua, Chaquehua, Stowaway, Copió, Coicopió or Red Patagua.

Evergreen tree, up to 8m high. The trunk reaches a diameter of about 30cm and the bark is ashen. The flowers are very showy, with fleshy, fleshy, fleshy, fleshy red petals, similar to a chilli or paprika.

Additional information:

The main value of this tree is ornamental, due to the beauty and colour of its abundant flowering, being highly appreciated in Europe and little cultivated in Chile.

A very low dose of infusion of its leaves relieves sprains, regularises the menstrual cycle, serves as a purgative, vomitive, abortifacient and expels worms. The juice of its leaves is poisonous, but in a decoction it is used to eliminate scabies, applying it to the whole body.



FUCHSIA MAGELLANICA

Common name: Chilca, Chilco, Chilcón, Fuchsia.

Evergreen shrub 1 - 4m high, smooth, with thin, fragile branches. Leaves in groups of 2 - 3, simple, ovate-lanceolate, acute, 2 - 6cm in length. Large flowers, 4 - 8cm long, solitary and pendulous with 5 violet or purple petals. The fruit is an edible berry with numerous seeds.

Additional information:

In folk medicine the twigs with leaves and flowers are used, as an infusion, in conditions related to the menstrual cycle (irregular, scanty, painful periods); also to control fever (mixed with linden) and as a diuretic.

The chilco is cultivated as an ornamental shrub for its showy flowers, and for its ability to resprout vigorously after pruning, thus producing a large number of new branches that flower at the arrival of summer.







EMBOTHRIMUM COCCINEUM

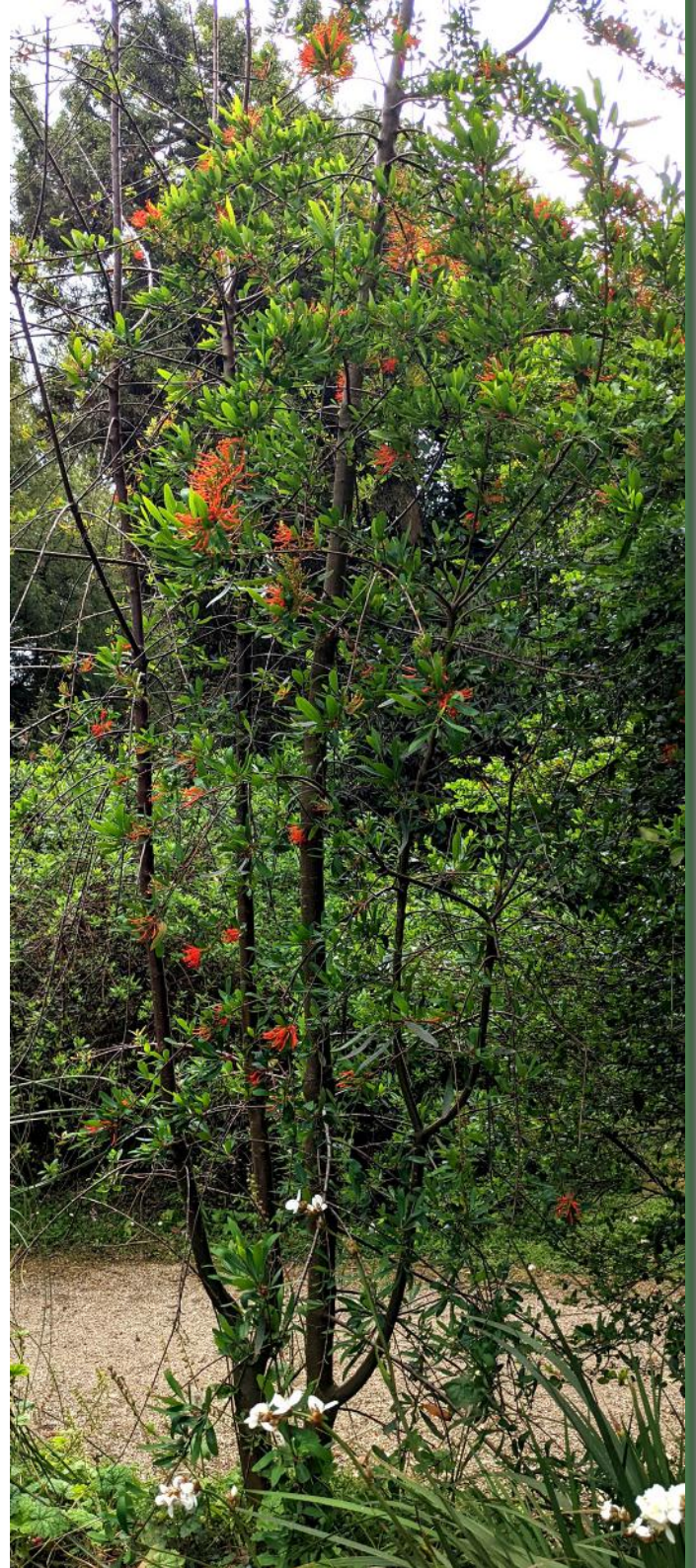
Common name: Notro, Ciruelillo, Fosforito, Treumún, Notru Treumun, Maku, Mögu or Mugu.

Evergreen tree, although in unfavourable environmental conditions it has the ability to shed its leaves. It reaches a height of up to 15m and its trunk measures up to 50cm in diameter. The bark is smooth, thin, grey with light and dark spots. Its flowers are very attractive, elongated, generally bright red, although there are very few specimens with yellow or white flowers.

Additional information:

It has one of the most beautiful woods of Chilean trees. It is used as a dye for wool, as the seed gives a light yellow colour, and the flowers, boiled with beetroot, give a reddish tone.

The infusion of its leaves and branches has properties for treating neuralgia, gland disorders, toothache, as a purgative and healing agent. It is a pioneer species in the natural regeneration of areas devastated by fires, landslides and other alterations of the original forest.





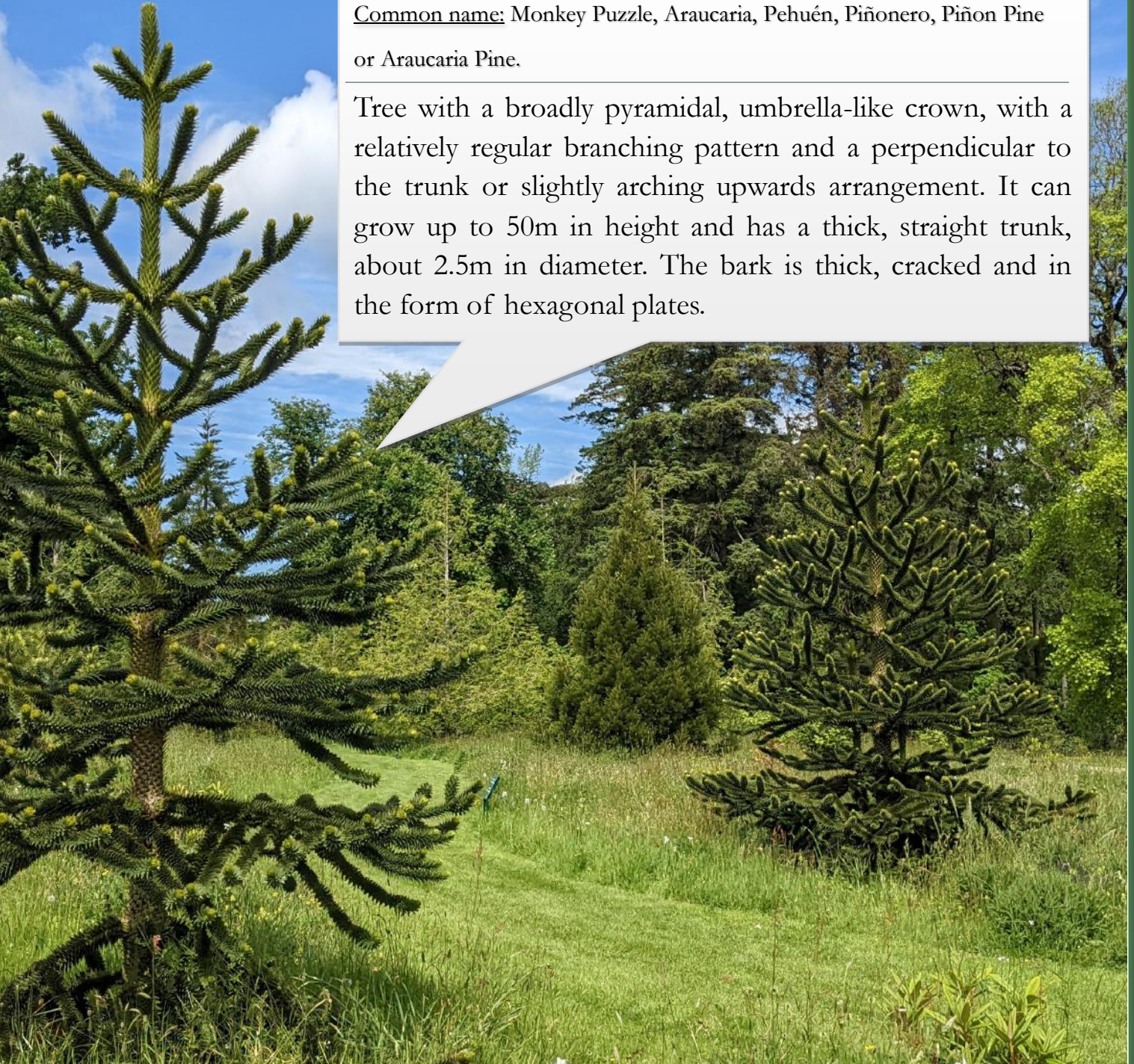
Additional information:

Fossilised wood of a related species has been found in Pichasca, Limarí Province, 75 million years old. The seeds are known as "piñones", have a high nutritional value and are eaten cooked or roasted and form the basis of the diet of the Pehuenche people. It is slow-growing and individuals have been found that are more than 1,000 years old. It has a great ornamental value due to the beauty of its shape, which is why its use in parks and gardens is widespread in Chile and abroad, especially in Ireland.

ARAUCARIA ARAUCANA

Common name: Monkey Puzzle, Araucaria, Pehuén, Piñonero, Piñon Pine or Araucaria Pine.

Tree with a broadly pyramidal, umbrella-like crown, with a relatively regular branching pattern and a perpendicular to the trunk or slightly arching upwards arrangement. It can grow up to 50m in height and has a thick, straight trunk, about 2.5m in diameter. The bark is thick, cracked and in the form of hexagonal plates.





DESFONTAINIA SPINOSA

Common name: Taique, Chapico, Trau-trau.

Shrub about 2m tall with red flowers, usually with five petals.

Additional information:

Plant of great ornamental value. This species is resistant to low temperatures and can withstand temperatures as low as -8°C , including occasional snowfall, as well as snow cover for short periods (a couple of weeks a year).





LUMA APICULATA “Glanleam Gold”

Common name: Myrtus luma Glanleam Gold.

The Glanleam Gold variety of Chilean Myrtle that was developed through selective breeding or hybridization. It is not a naturally occurring species.

It is characterized by its golden-yellow foliage, which is particularly vibrant in spring and summer. It is a popular ornamental plant in gardens and parks in Ireland, and is grown for its attractive foliage and white flowers, which appear in summer.

Additional information:

The origin of the cultivar is not entirely clear, but it is believed to have been developed in Glanleam Gardens, Valentia Island, County Kerry, Ireland, in the early 20th century. Glanlea Gardens is a well-known garden that is home to many rare and exotic plants from around the world, and it is possible that the cultivar was developed there as part of their collection.



AEXTOXICON PUNCTATUM

Common name: Olivillo, Tique, Teque, Palo muerto, Aceitunillo.

Evergreen tree with dark foliage, capable of reaching a height of over 20m and has smooth bark, with light opaque shades. It has oval to elongated leaves. Its flowers have white petals, and are star-shaped and its fruits when ripe are shaped like small olives or olives, which is why this species is called Olivillo.



Additional information:

It is the only member of its botanical family whose affinity with other plant groups is unclear. The cloud forests it forms in the Cordillera de la Costa between the provinces of Limarí and Petorca have been interpreted as relicts, or remnants, of a distribution prior to glacial times. In Chiloé mythology, it is said to be the tree from which the Trauco stalks his victims and dominates the forest. In Chiloé folk medicine, the infusion of an old olivillo stick is used to soothe rheumatic pains.





PILGERODENDRON UVIFERUM

Common name: Cipres De Las Guaitecas.

Gymnosperm. Slow growth, reaches about 20m, trunk up to 1 meter in diameter. It grows in moist soils forming cypress groves. Its wood is non-decaying, and in the 20th century, it was heavily exploited for poles. The southernmost conifer in the world, it lives from sea level to 800m above sea level.





PODOCARPUS SALIGNUS

Common name: Long-leaved Mañío, Mañío, Mañiu, Mañilahual, Mañío Colorado or White Pine.

Conifer with a very branched crown, pyramidal to rounded in appearance. It can reach up to 20m in height and its trunk is 1 metre in diameter. The bark is greyish-brown and peels with age.



BOMAREA SALSILLA

Common name: Salsilla, Zarcilla, Copihuito.

Plant with elongated, sarmentose, glabrous stems, up to 1m long, with fibrous roots, with 7 to 9 oblong tubercles. Leaves with 1cm long resupinate petioles, lanceolate to oblong-lanceolate, up to 10cm long, glabrous, glaucous underside, with 5 conspicuous nerves, sinuous margin. Flowers arranged in an umbel with 4-8 dichotomous rays up to 7.5cm long, with 1 to 3 flowers. Perianth 6-segmented, up to 2cm long, free, purplish to dark pink, rarely white, the outer ones slightly thicker than the inner ones. Stamens 6, unequal, up to 15mm long. Ovary turbinate, 4mm long, glabrous, with 6 edges. Its fruit a blackish, thick capsule, up to 1cm long, with the base of the style persistent.

Additional information:

This species has a high potential for ornamental use, due to its beautiful showy red, pink or lively vermilion flowers and rapid annual herbaceous growth.





MYRCEUGENIA LEPTOSPERMOIDES

Common name: Macella, Petrillo, Chequen of thin leaf, Macolla.

It reaches 0.50 to 2m in height. The branches are grey, and the new ones are pubescent. The leaves are oblong-lanceolate, with an obtuse apex and a lighter underside. The small flowers are solitary with 60 to 90 stamens. The peduncle and hypanthium are pubescent. The fruit is a small, red berry with 1 or 2 seeds.

It grows in coastal ravines associated with the undergrowth near watercourses.

It is very rare and categorized as endangered.



PUYA CHILENSIS

Common name: Chagual, Cardón, Montera.

It is endemic to central Chile, and can reach a height of 2 to 3m. They take about 20 years to flower and develop an inflorescence of about 2m that resembles a medieval club. After pollination, it produces numerous seedy nuts, although the recommended method of propagation is to separate seedlings that sprout just before and during flowering.

SISYRINCHIUM STRIATUM

Common name: Ñuño, Huilmo.

This is a geophyte with a compressed rhizome and thin fibrous roots. It is a robust plant with broad linear leaves that turn black when old. The erect, striated, slightly winged floral stem can reach up to 70cm in height. The flowers are arranged in a spike with 12 to 20 verticils, each containing an oval bract. The 6 tepals are pale yellow, becoming more intense towards the base with brown veins. The 3 stamens have filaments joined up to the middle, and the style is trifid. The fruit is a capsule.

It grows in sunny clearings of sclerophyllous forests.



LUMA CHEQUEN

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Common name: Chequén, Wite Arrayán.

Very scarce as a tree due to its slow growth, usually a shrub. Grayish brown bark. Branched, dense crown. Coriaceous, oval, pointed leaves, smaller than those of *Luma Apiculata*, glandular-dotted, aromatic. Axillary flowers, solitary with peduncle longer than leaves, 4 petals, numerous stamens, glabrous ovary, in summer. Fruit is a dark berry with several seeds, ripens after flowering.





UGNI MOLINAE

Common name: Murta.

It is a shrub that is usually found on cleared land, on the edges of woodland or forming part of the shrubby undergrowth. Its forms are diverse due to its adaptations to the environment in which it grows. It is generally found in forest clearings with a certain amount of light. It is common in both mountain ranges. It is not particularly demanding in terms of soil quality, but is very demanding in terms of humidity, growing well in poorly lit places and very cold climates, with some resistance to snow damage. It is a polymorphous evergreen. species, which can reach up to 2m in height. Its evergreen foliage is green with reddish glints, very pleasing to the eye.



Additional information:

The plant produces edible fruits, which consist of small, globular berries with a pleasant flavour and aroma, which are used for fresh consumption and as an ingredient in the manufacture of jams, syrups, desserts and liqueurs. It also has aromatic properties, is stimulating and astringent.



GUNNERA TINCTORIA

Common name: Nalca, Pangué, Panque.

Giant herb 1.5m high with more or less underground, thick, short, fleshy stem. Leaves alternate, with long (up to 1.5m), thick, fleshy petioles, strewn with pointed warts; 0.6 - 1.5m in diameter, 5 or more lobed margins with sharp

teeth on the margins. Inflorescences spiciform, thick, shorter than the leaves and sometimes hidden in them, 20-60cm long, bearing a tight cylindrical cluster of small flowers. The fruit is an ovoid, orange-red drupe, 1.5 to 2mm in diameter, containing one seed.



Additional information:

The uses of Nalca are numerous, several of them related to the astringent and hemostatic properties attributed to it; thus, they are used in hemorrhages, abundant and painful periods, dysentery, diarrhea, to wash wounds and treat affections of the mouth and throat; It is also used for stomach and liver problems; on the other hand, the decoction prepared with the leaves is used to reduce fever either by drinking the preparation or by placing the cooked leaves, in the form of a poultice, on the patient's back in the area of the kidneys. In Chiloé cuisine, its leaves are used to cover curanto and to wrap portions of potato-based dough for cooking; the macerate of its flowers makes a refreshing drink.

LIBERTIA CHILENSIS

Common name: Calle-Calle, Tequel-tequel.

Perennial, grass-like growing plant, which can reach 90cm in height. Its flowers are white and usually have three petals. It forms dense clumps and long, bushy, encyst-shaped leaves, gathered in inflorescences longer than the leaves. Its fruit a trichocarpic capsule, rounded seeds.





FASCICULARIA BICOLOR SUBSP. CANALICULATA

Common name: Puñeñe, Poe.

Long leaves 0.8 to 1.1cm wide, grooved, with small scales on the underside, slightly spiny and recurved margin, arranged in a rosette. Apical inflorescence, lilac-blue flowers, the immediate leaves often red. Habitat: mainly epiphytic in primary evergreen forest, rare in secondary forest. It grows from 150 to 900m above sea level towards the interior. It differs from the type species by having narrower and longer, grooved leaves, tolerant to shade, and an epiphytic habit on trees.





JOVELLANA VIOLACEA

Common name: Capachito, Violet Teacup Flower.

Up to 1.2m tall, highly branched. Brown stems. Small, tomentose leaves with 2 or 3 large teeth on the margin and a pointed apex. Flowers in terminal, multi-flower inflorescences with dark, tomentose peduncles, calyx, and corolla. The bilabiate flowers are white with a yellow spot on the lower lip and numerous dark purple dots, with 2 stamens. The fruit is a small capsule.



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MYRTACEAE

Luma Chequén

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