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*Fitzroya*

*Cupressaceae*

*Fitzroya* commemorates an English naval officer, hydrographer and meteorologist, Vice-Admiral Robert Fitzroy (1805-1865), who not only commanded HMS *Beagle* when she circumnavigated the world in 1831 with Charles Darwin on board as official naturalist, but also founded today's British Met Office and established the basis for the weather forecasting familiar to so many today. Joining the Royal Navy in 1818, he was appointed temporary Captain of HMS *Beagle* in December 1828 in Rio de Janeiro (upon the death of his predecessor who shot himself) and was instructed to finish the partially-completed hydrographic survey of Tierra del Fuego, Straits of Magellan and Patagonia before returning to England. In 1831 his command of HMS *Beagle* was confirmed for her second surveying expedition (Equator to Cape Horn and South American coastline) and Charles Darwin joined him on board as companion and naturalist. Fitzroy hoped Darwin's presence could help to balance any isolation and stress imposed by his command during the impending voyage. Five years later they sailed home, and Captain Fitzroy received the Premum medal from the Royal Geographical Society in 1837. *Narrative of the Surveying Voyages of HMS Adventure and Beagle* was published in 1839 for which Fitzroy edited two volumes and Darwin one. In 1841 briefly Fitzroy became a Member of Parliament for Durham. Although his religious Anglican views prevented him from understanding Darwin's theories on evolution, they recommended him to those who influenced the choice of the second Governor-General of New Zealand in 1843, only for him to be replaced in 1845 (Colonial Office policy, inadequate resources and local politics helped to undermine his administration). In 1851 he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society, and he became Chief of the new Meteorological Office in 1855. In this post he invented several barometers, established the collection of weather data at set times from all over the world, adopted the term 'forecasting the weather', developed the first weather forecasting charts and set up the first storm warning system – all this with three immediate staff. In 2002 Finisterre, one of the sea areas west of the Bay of Biscay used for weather forecasting in the British Isles, was re-christened Fitzroy in his memory – and also to reduce confusion with a similarly named Spanish sea area.