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Quercus variabilis

[Synonyms : *Castanopsis sclerophylla*, *Quercus bungeana*, *Quercus chinensis*, *Quercus moulei*, *Quercus sclerophylla*, *Quercus serrata*, *Quercus serrata* var. *chinensis*, *Quercus variabilis* var. *megaphylla*, *Quercus variabilis* var. *pyramidalis*]

CHINESE CORK OAK is a deciduous tree. Native to China, Japan, Korea and Taiwan, it has dull dark green leaves and small, deeply cupped, rounded acorns.

It is also known as *Chêne liège de Chine* (French), *Chinesische Kork-Eiche* (German), Oriental cork oak, Oriental oak, *Paráskérgu tölgy* (Hungarian), and *Saagjas tamm* (Estonian).

The flowers are pollinated by the wind.

Variabilis is derived from Latin *vario* meaning ‘variable, differing or diverse’ with reference to the variable leaf shape.

The burr-like capsules around the acorns have provided the source of a black dye which the Chinese have used to colour silk and other fabrics.

In China the pinkish-grey or brown bark has been used for fishing net floats and as an alternative to cork, traditionally obtained in the West from Cork oak, *Quercus suber*.

The wood has been used for general construction.

Chinese cork oak was introduced to North America in 1861, and by Robert Fortune (1830-1880), the Scottish horticulturist and plant collector, to Britain in the same year.