

Japanese cedar (*Cryptomeria japonica*) provenance trials in Britain

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Executive summary

This report presents results from a suite of provenance trials for *Cryptomeria japonica* (Thunb. ex.L.f.) D. in Britain, which were planted in 1958. There are two replicated experiments in Devon and a third trial that included 7 unreplicated plots at Loch Goil in Scotland, that were last assessed in 1983 (before being felled). The experiments tested 10 provenances from Japan and one treatment that was vegetatively propagated material that originated from China. The results show that:

- 1. The species has the potential to be a productive species all the provenances achieved between GYC20 and GYC24 at the two sites.
- 2. There were significant differences in survival and growth between the provenances in the early years after establishment; however, there were no differences in height and diameter for the 2016 assessment.
- 3. The form of the tree at the experiment in Devon was very good with a majority of trees being assessed to be the best form class.

The findings of this project support an earlier recommendation that the best seed origins for planting in the UK come from the mid-latitudes of Honshu (34-38°N). However, further work to confirm this and expand our knowledge of the timber properties of this promising species would be justified.



Introduction

Cryptomeria japonica (Thunb. ex.L.f.) D. has been cultivated in Japan for around 500 years (Tokugawa, 1974) and is now the dominant forestry species in Japan, accounting for 44% of the forest area and covering some 4.5 million hectares (Forest Agency, 2008). The species was introduced to the Britain from Japan in 1861 (Mitchell, 1978) and has been planted for forestry on a very small scale; currently around 4213 ha for GB. Although there are questions regarding timber quality of trees grown outside of Japan (Savill 2015, Knowles and Miller 1997) there is renewed interest in the forestry potential of the species in light of potential impacts of climate change on biotic and abiotic factors affecting UK forestry (e.g. Sturrock *et al.*, 2011, Broadmeadow *et al.*, 2005).

For any given tree species, matching the right provenance to the right place can mean the difference between a strong, healthy plantation and poor growth and form, or even total failure (Lines, 1987). Ultimately, the most reliable source of information on optimum provenances can only come from structured trialling of a range of seed origins and provenances (Jinks and Kerr, 2016). In 1958 two experiments were established by the Forestry Commission to examine differences in performance of different provenances of Cryptomeria in Britain; Glynn 4 in Cornwall and LochGoil 1 near Drymsynie Forest in Argyll, south-west Scotland.

Preliminary analysis and summary of the early assessment data from Glynn 4 and LochGoil 1 by Jinks and Kerr (2016) found that there were significant differences between provenances, significant relationships between latitude and survival, and between latitude and height. They concluded that seed origins from the mid latitudes of Honshu (34°N to 38°N) were probably those best suited to use in Britain.

Subsequently the current status of both experiments was re-assessed with a view to obtaining updated information on provenance performance. Of the two sites only Glynn 4 is extant and this was re-assessed in 2016, allowing 58-year data on survival and tree height for each provenance to be gathered. The objectives of this report are to analyse in more detail the early and latest survival and growth data to identify provenances that have performed consistently well or poorly.



Materials and methods

Three experiments were established by the Forestry Commission in 1958 to examine differences in performance of provenances of Cryptomeria in Britain. Plants of ten Japanese provenances were raised at Forestry Commission nurseries from seed sourced by Professor B. Lindquist (Göteborgs Botaniska, Trädøgard, Göteborg, Sweden) and Professor Asakawa from Japan. Plants derived from trees at Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh of a Chinese population were raised as vegetative cuttings (Table 1).

Available quantities of seed were small, and yield of plants varied widely between provenances. However, sufficient plants were available for a two-part trial at Glynn Forest in Cornwall, south-west England (Glynn 4), and a smaller trial in Drimsynie Forest in Argyll, south-west Scotland (LochGoil 1).

Provenance ID	Location	Latitude °N	Longitude °E	Glynn 4i ¹	Glynn 4e ¹	LochGoil 1
55/106	Simayaku, Yakushima	30.36	130.51	V		
55/108	Kitago village, Kawaharadini	31.85	131.14	V		
	National Forest, Miyazaki					
55/114	Sizokuisi National Forest, Iwate	37.78	140.98	٧	٧	٧
55/115	Takata National Forest, Niigata	35.3	139.14	٧		٧
55/116	Yanase National Forest, Kooti ²	35.3	134.87	٧	٧	٧
55/117	Tottori National Forest	35.37	134.13	٧		
55/118	Sibata National Forest, Niigata	37.94	139.32	٧	٧	
55/119	Nanakura National Forest, Akita ³	39.7	140.24	٧	٧	V
55/120	Sirasawa National Forest, Akita ⁴	39.7	140.24	V	٧	٧
53/210	Benmore Forest Garden*	36.71	140.57			٧
56/227	Central plain of China (vegetatively propagated)			٧	٧	V

Table 1. Provenance and location of experimental treatments.

¹ Experiment Glynn 4 had two parts: Glynn 4i, an intensive trial, and Glynn 4e, an extensive trial with bigger plots.

² Kooti could not be found as a location in Japan, but it could refer to Kochi as there is a Yanase Forest Park in Kochi at Lat 33.610, Long 134.099.

³ Nanakura could be a contraction of Nanakurayama, referring to Nanakurayama Forest, Noshiro.

⁴ Sirasawa could be Shirasawa

Glynn 4 comprised two parts: Glynn 4i is an intensive trial with 10 provenances in small 9-tree plots, and Glynn 4e is an extensive trial with five provenances planted in larger 81 tree plots. The intensive trial was set out as a randomised block design comprising



the 10 provenances as treatments randomised in 3 blocks. Each treatment plot contained 9 trees planted at 180 cm spacing in a 3 x 3 tree layout with 180cm between plots. The extensive trial was an incomplete Latin square design with five provenances and 4 replicates, plus an additional single plot of provenance 56/227. Plot size was 81 trees arranged in a 9 × 9 grid at 6 foot spacing (180cm). The second trial at Drimsynie was an unreplicated experiment consisting of single plots of 7 provenances. Plot size was 30 trees planted at 5 foot spacing (152 cm) in a 5 x 6 tree layout.

File notes record that the weather conditions immediately after planting were not ideal for establishment. At Glynn 4 a period of unusually dry weather persisted for three to four weeks after planting, whilst at LochGoil 1 there was a similar length spell of unseasonably cold weather. Both sites were hand-weeded at variable intervals dependent upon site. Cherry laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus* L.) and gorse (*Ulex europaeus* L.) growth was cleared from Glynn 4i and Glynn 4e in 1964, and again in 1966. Following a site inspection in 1962 which noted poor tree growth at Glynn, trees in both the intensive and extensive trials received an application of 28.35g of Fisons triple super-phosphate (0-46-0). A higher rate of 85.05g per tree was applied to trees in the extensive trial in March 1965 shortly before assessment.

With the exception of the Chinese vegetatively propagated material, the intensive plots at Glynn were fully beaten-up in 1959. The extensive plots were partially beaten-up with Cryptomeria where additional seedlings of the correct provenances were available, and with Lawson cypress (*Chamaecyparis lawsoniana* (A. Murray bis) Parl.) where not.

The assessment history of the experiments is shown in Table 2. The condition of the three experiments in 2016 was variable. Surviving trees were found in Glynn 4i, however, it was not possible to reconstruct the plot layout on the ground because of irregular operational thinning and potentially unrecorded buffer trees. Indicative yield classes for Glynn 4e in 2016, and for LochGoil 1 in 1983 were calculated using the top height-age relationships for western red cedar as per the Forest Yield User manual (Forestry Commission, 2016), assuming mean provenance height was a good estimate of top height.

First-year survival, and survival and height after 6 years (1964) that were summarised in Jinks and Kerr (2016) were re-analysed in more detail to identify different groups of provenances with similar responses. The structure of Glynn 4e was recovered on the ground in 2016 and the height of two largest diameter trees per plot, stem diameter and form score were measured. Form score was assessed using a 1-3 scale where 1 = single, straight clear stem and leader ('potentially excellent timber tree'); 2 = single stem and leader but some kinks in main stem and/or heavy branching ('potential timber tree'); and 3 = neither 1 nor 2 ('candidate to remove in early thinning'). Because of unrecorded thinning operations, it was not possible to determine reliable survival data in 2016. The single-replicate experiment at LochGoil 1 was clear-felled in 1983, but height and



survival were assessed beforehand and are summarised here for comparison of provenance performance.

	1958	1960	1961	1963	1964	1965	1968	1983	2016
Glynn 4i	Ht/S	Ht/S	Ht/S		Ht/S	Ht/S			Ht/DBH/F
Glynn 4e	Ht/S	Ht/S	Ht/S						Ht/DBH/F
LochGoil 1		Ht/S		Ht/S			Ht/S	Ht/S	

Table 2. Assessment dates for each of the trials. Ht = height, S = survival, DBH = diameter at breast height, F = form score.

Data for Glynn 4i in 1965 were only available as maximum height for each provenance and provenance means for survival.

Survival in Glynn 4i at the end of year one (1958) was analysed using a generalised linear mixed model (GLMM) in R (R Core Team, 2013) using binomial errors and a logit link function. For the number of live trees after one-year, a generalised linear mixed model (GLMM) was fitted with Provenance as the fixed effect and Block and Observation number as random effects – the latter was included to correct for overdispersion. A GLMM failed to fit using counts of live trees in 1964, consequently survival was analysed using a generalised linear model with Provenance and Block as factors; the model fitted well with no overdispersion. After fitting both models, post-hoc analysis of differences between the survivals of provenances was carried out on predicted responses using the Ismeans and cld functions in R, and Tukey's method to correct for multiplicity. Survival in Glynn 4e at the end of year one (1958) was also analysed using GLMM in R as above.

Height measurements from Glynn4i in 1965 were analysed by Analysis of Variance, and Tukey's HSD test used to group provenances with similar heights using GENSTAT 16 (Payne *et al.* 2013). Heights and diameters recorded in 2016 in Glynn 4e were analysed using a linear mixed model with provenance as the fixed effect, and Block as the random effect using GENSTAT.

The analysis of these experiments was complicated by the unbalanced distribution of provenances between the intensive and extensive trials of Glynn 4, and LochGoil 1. It was not possible to re-establish the layout of plots of Glynn 4i for the 2016 assessment so only data from Glynn 4e was analysed for that year. Due to possible thinning operations a valid assessment of survival at year-58 (2016) was not possible though DBH (diameter at breast height) of all surviving trees, and the height of the two largest diameter trees was assessed. Lochgoil 1 was un-replicated and the site felled after a final assessment in 1983 so data for that site are presented here in summary form only. A list of datasets analysed is given below (Table 3).



Trial	Year	Dataset
Glynn 4i	1958	Survival
Glynn 4i	1964	Survival
Glynn 4i	1965	Height
Glynn 4e	1958	Survival
	2016	Height
		DBH
		Form (summarised)
		Yield class (summarised)
LochGoil 1	1961, 1964, 1968, 1981	Height (summarised)
	1964, 1983	Survival (summarised)
	1983	Yield class (summarised)

Table 3. Datasets with analyses or summaries in this report.



0.0850

0.0320

0.0764

0.0766

а

а

а

b

0.685

0.918

0.739

0.739

Results

55/115

55/116

55/117

55/118

55/119

55/120

56/227

0.966

0.480

0.823

0.966

0.557

0.897

0.932

0.035

0.116

0.082

0.035

0.114

0.063

0.050

а

а

а

b

b

b

<u>Glynn 4</u>

Survival figures for year one showed a significant difference between provenances for both the intensive (P<0.001) and extensive trials (P<0.001) (Table 4). For the intensive trial, three groupings were identified with some overlap between them, essentially low, medium and high survivals, with three provenances (55/108, 55/118 and 56/227) above 90%. The extensive trial showed two groups and provenance 55/118 having a significantly higher survival (92%) compared to the others (average 69%).

Glynn 4i Glynn 4e Survival Provenance Survival SE Provenance SE Groups Groups 55/106 0.672 0.106 а b С 55/108 0.966 0.035 С 55/114 55/114 0.607 0.0933 а

55/116

55/118

55/119

55/120

С

С

С

С

С

Table 4. Predicted mean proportion of survival at end of the first season of each provenance in Glynn 4 trials, together with the estimated standard errors and groupings. Survival figures highlighted in yellow are below 80%.

Provenance 55/114 is omitted from the analysis for Glynn 4i as only one block was planted in the first year.

After 6 years, survival was only recorded for the intensive trial; analysis showed a significant difference between provenances (P<0.001) (Table 5). The dispersion parameter was 1.052 suggesting that the model was a good fit without under or over dispersion. Provenances 55/106 and 56/227 had lower survival below 75% while six provenances had survival above 90% (Table 5). Provenance 55/118 was consistently in the highest grouping for survival for both extensive and intensive trials.



Table 5. Predicted mean proportion of survival 6 years after planting (1964) of eachprovenance at the Glynn 4 (intensive) trial, together with the estimated standard error.Survival figures highlighted in yellow are below 80%.

Provenance	Survival	SE	Groups		
55/106	0.630	0.0929	а		
55/108	0.963	0.0363		b	С
55/114	0.889	0.0605	а	b	С
55/115	1.000	0.0000			С
55/116	0.926	0.0504	а	b	С
55/117	0.926	0.0504	а	b	С
55/118	1.000	0.0000			С
55/119	0.963	0.0363		b	С
55/120	0.889	0.0605	а	b	С
56/227	0.741	0.0843	а	b	

There were significant differences between provenances in height at Glynn 4i in 1965 (P<0.001) and post-hoc analysis identified three groups (Figure 1). However, there were no significant differences between provenances based on either DBH (Table 6) or height (Table 7) from the 2016 assessment of Glynn 4e.

Table 6. Mean DBH (cm) by provenance for Glynn 4 (extensive) in 2016.

Provenance	Mean DBH (cm)	s.d.
55/114	59.7	13.08
55/116	54.3	8.05
55/118	51.9	11.57
55/119	55.4	10.97
55/120	56.3	14.53



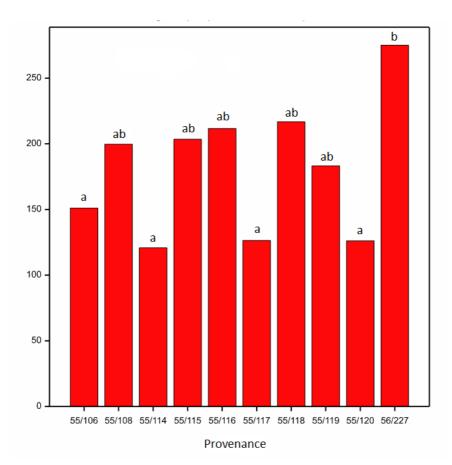


Figure 1. Glynn 4 (intensive) mean heights (cm) in 1965 after 7 years. Provenances with the same letter are not statistically different.

Table 7. Top heights and indicative General Yield Class for provenances at Glynn 4(extensive) in 2016 and LochGoil 1 in 1983.

	LochGoil 1 1983 (25 years)		Glynn 4e 201	6 (58 years)
Provenance	Top height (cm)	GYC	GYC Top height (cm)	
55/114	1415	20	2832	22
55/115	1650	24		
55/116	1580	24	2822	22
55/118			2862	22
55/119	1510	22	2926	24
56/120	1550	24	2853	22
53/210	1625	24		
56/227	1415	20	2820	22



It was not possible to perform a statistical analysis of form score data gathered in 2016 for Glynn 4e but the results are presented here as the percentage of trees of each provenance in each form category (Figure 2). At least 60% of trees in each provenance were assessed as potentially excellent timber trees and less than 15% of each provenance as candidates for removal during early thinning.

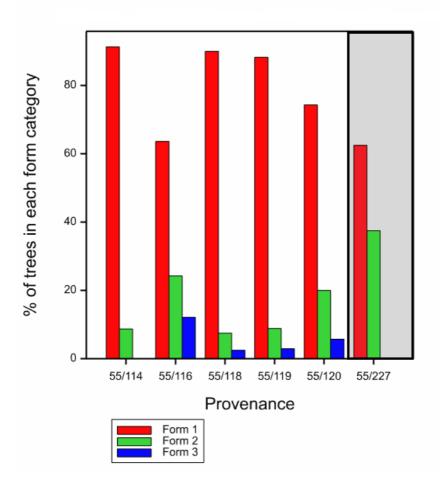
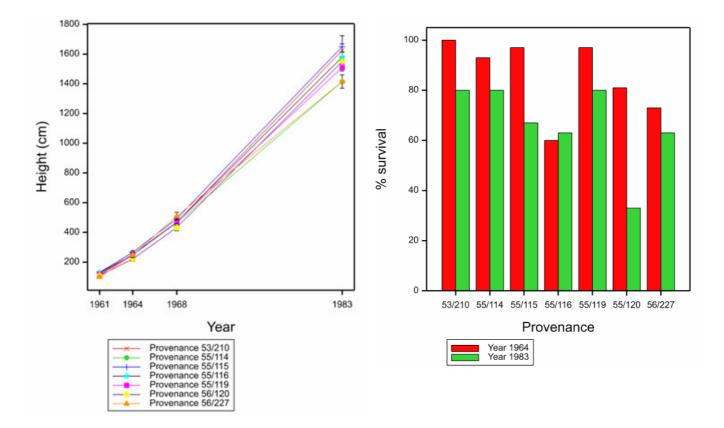


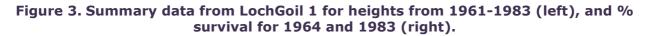
Figure 2. Percentage of trees in 2016 at Glynn 4 (extensive) within each form category for all provenances. Provenance 55/227 was only represented in one of the four blocks.



Loch Goil 1

Data from LochGoil 1 are presented here as summaries as the trial was un-replicated and cannot be statistically analysed.







Discussion

The objective of this report is to examine the effect of provenance on the survival, growth and stem form of *Cryptomeria japonica* in the provenance trials set up in 1958 at Glynn in Cornwall and at LochGoil in Scotland.

There are four key findings:

- Trees at both LochGoil 1 (25-years-old) and Glynn 4e (58-years-old) had an indicative General Yield Class of between 20 and 24.
- There were significant survival differences between provenances after one year for both the intensive and extensive trials at Glynn 4, and for the intensive trial after 6 years. Provenance 55/118 was consistently in the highest grouping for survival on both extensive and intensive trials.
- There were significant differences in the 6-year height data for the intensive trial, but after 58 years of growth there were no significant differences in height or DBH between the provenances in the extensive trial.
- After 58 years growth, the majority of trees for all provenances at Glynn 4e produced trees with a form classed as being potentially excellent timber trees.

Successful establishment of trees is a critical step in the life of a plantation and excessive beating-up can be expensive. At the end of the first season three of the provenances at Glynn 4i were below 80% survival; 55/106, 55/116, and 55/119. With the exception of 55/117 all other provenances were in excess of 90% survival. After 6 growing seasons 55/106 and 56/227 were below 80% survival with 63% and 74% respectively. All plots at Glynn 4i were fully beaten-up in 1959 but there are no data which allows individual survivors from the initial planting to be followed, so the data from the end of the first year are considered to give a more reliable picture. That said, the most southerly provenance 55/106, showed the lowest survival at 63% which could indicate that it may not be suited to UK forestry. In contrast, provenance 55/118 was consistently in the highest grouping for survival on both intensive and extensive trials after one year (96% and 92% respectively).

It is not possible to say with certainty that provenance is the primary driver because factors such as plant quality and to a lesser degree planting methods or edaphic factors may also play a part in explaining survival. However, height data from the intensive plots in 1965 also showed that there were significant differences between provenances



with three distinct groups present; four provenances in the shortest group, one with the tallest and then an overlapping group of the remaining five. The tallest provenance was the veg. prop. material from central China with a mean of 275 cm, which can be compared with the shortest provenance 55/114 at 121 cm. Provenance 55/106 which had a low survival at the end of year one was in the same grouping and had a mean height of 151 cm. The plot structure of the intensive trial could not be recovered for the 58-year assessment in 2016, but height and DBH measurements for the extensive trial were possible. Provenance 55/106 was not included in the extensive trial, so it is not possible to say if poor growth early carried through to later development. However, 55/114 was included and there was no significant difference between the mean heights of any of the provenances, so any early differences were no longer evident.

As with height and DBH after 58 years growth, there was little difference between provenances in either indicative GYC or form, although data for these two metrics were not suited to statistical analysis. On both sites, trees achieved a GYC of between 20 and 24, making it a high volume producer on a par with grand fir (*Abies grandis* (Douglas ex D.Don) Lindl.) and confirming the thoughts of Savill (2015), that it may be a productive species. Although absent in the literature, there are anecdotal concerns about the form of Cryptomeria which are not supported by data collected from Glynn 4e. The majority of trees in all provenances were scored as potentially excellent timber trees with a low proportion of trees classed as candidates to remove during early thinning.

Identifying differences between provenances is of limited value if the accuracy of provenance information is unreliable. In these trials latitude and longitude details are only reliably available at the prefecture level as exact locations could not be determined from the location details recorded for each provenance, and there is no altitude data. It is possible that this is due in part to misspelling or contractions from the Japanese. For example, provenance 55/119 is recorded as being from Nanakura National Forest in Akita prefecture. Whilst no record could be found for Nanakura National Forest, there is a Nanakurayama Forest. Similarly 55/116 is listed as being from Yanase National Forest, Kooti. There is a Yanase Forest Park in Kochi prefecture, but no web-based searches yielded a match for 'Kooti'. The absence of altitudinal information is also important given that Cryotomeria is recorded growing up to altitudes ranging from 760m a.s.l. in the north of its range to 1830m in the south (Tsumura and Ohba, 1993). A future accession from the lower altitude for a given provenance could have different frost tolerance characteristics to one from a higher altitude and this could have a significant impact on survival during establishment.

The other major factors affecting the usefulness of these trials were the unbalanced distribution of provenances between the trials, the lack of replication at Loch Goil, and the lack of detailed records making it impossible to establish the variation within treatment plots or, in the case of 1965 height data for Glynn 4i, the variation within a provenance treatment. Finally, it was not possible to reconstruct the layout of Glynn 4i,



partially because it was not possible to track individual tree survival because only data for means or percentages for each treatment plot were retained in records. Trees may also have been removed as part of the regular thinning cycle once the plots were returned to the Forest District but there is no record of such operations. Any future trials will need to be fully replicated on a range of sites and the full history of each plot recorded meticulously.

Conclusions

This suite of *Cryptomeria japonica* provenance trials are currently the only ones in Britain and as such they have provided some useful insight into similarities and potential differences between the provenances tested. Indicative GYC was universally high at between 20 and 24, making Cryptomeria a high volume producer on a par with grand fir. Similarly tree form did not vary with provenance, the majority of trees assessed as being potentially excellent timber trees.

There are indications that there are significant differences between provenances in the establishment phase with provenance 55/118 (Sibata National Forest, Niigata – 37.94°N) performing significantly better in early survival compared with others, supporting the recommendation by Jinks and Kerr (2016) that seed origins from the mid-latitudes of Honshu (34°N to 38°N) are probably best suited to use in Britain. For example, provenance 55/106 (Simayaku, Yakushima 30.36°N) is to the south of the recommended latitudes and was consistently poor in terms of survival and early growth. In terms of growth there were no significant differences in either height or DBH between the provenances at Glynn 4e 58 years after planting. However, the causes of the high losses in early stages are not clear and there are a number of issues which make clear interpretation of the data difficult. Either way, further provenance trials of this promising species would be justified.



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