

# Cornus controversa

## Wedding Cake Tree



*Cornus controversa standard in flower*

*Cornus controversa* is a small, deciduous tree growing up to 15m in height. Its architectural tiered appearance makes it the perfect specimen or focal point in any garden or parkland. Brought here from China and Japan, it has been grown in the UK since the late 19th Century.

In Spring, green, elliptical leaves appear alternately on the branches followed by clusters of tiny, white, star shaped flowers in May/ June. The flowers have a scent which attracts the insects for pollination. Green berries ripen to blue-black in Autumn and provide a valuable food source for birds. The foliage will also turn to reds and purples giving a beautiful autumn show.

Once the branches are bare, *Cornus controversa* still makes an attractive tree due to its ornamental, tiered form.

### *Cornus controversa* 'Variegata'

A smaller variety only growing to 8-10 metres and the leaves are bright green with a thick cream margin. All other features are the same as *Cornus controversa*.

## Plant Profile

**Name:** *Cornus controversa*

**Common Name:** Wedding Cake Tree - due to its distinctive tiered habit

**Family:** Cornaceae

**Height:** Up to 15m

**Demands:** Although tolerant of dappled shade, grown best in full sun and neutral soil

**Flowers:** Clusters of tiny, white, flowers

**Foliage:** Elliptical, green leaves. 'Variegata' has a broad cream margin

**Fruit:** Small green berries ripening to blue-black in Autumn



*4-5m feathered plant*

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Wedding Cake Tree

Deepdale  
 3rd May 2011 - The Duchess of Cornwall planted a 'Wedding Cake Tree' to commemorate the marriage of Prince William and Kate Middleton.



New leaves in Spring



3-4m multistem



Cornus controversa berries



Cornus controversa Variegata 2.5-3.0m multistem



Flower buds in May / June