



Back from extinction Rare flower cultivated in UK after 200-year absence

One of the rarest flowers in the world, which is now extinct in the wild, has been grown in Britain.

The *Franklinia alatamaha*, known as the Franklin tree, was discovered in 1765 by the Philadelphia botanists

John and William Bartram, who named it after their close friend Benjamin Franklin.

They found it on the banks of the Altamaha River in Georgia, but it has been extinct in the wild since the 1800s. A

specimen was brought back to Trewithen Estate Nursery near Truro, Cornwall, in the 18th century but disappeared and was feared lost forever. However, the plant has now been cultivated there again.

Three shrubs have flowered and staff expect another 10 to bloom next year. Luke Hazelton, the nursery manager, said: "It is such a rare shrub and extinct in the wild.

"To see it flower in this country is of great

interest to plant lovers. I've talked to plant experts at the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew, and they're surprised and excited as we are, especially as it's flowering earlier than expected."