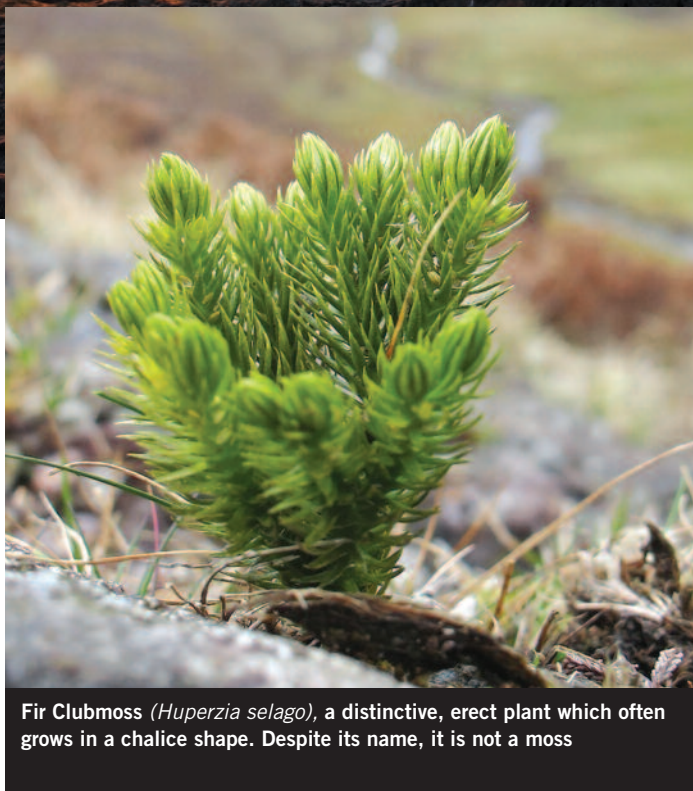




Carrauntoohil sunset, June 2013. Photo: Tim Galvin



Fir Clubmoss (*Huperzia selago*), a distinctive, erect plant which often grows in a chalice shape. Despite its name, it is not a moss



St Patrick's Cabbage (*Saxifraga spathularis*). The spoon-shaped leaves are thick and leathery with zig-zag teeth. Between May and July, St Patrick's Cabbage has delicate white flowers on a tall stem

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## Report these mountain plants

### Research group seeks information on distribution of upland plants

Mountain Research Ireland is seeking help from hillwalkers and climbers to study the distribution of two plants found in Ireland's mountains: Fir Clubmoss (*Huperzia selago*) and St Patrick's Cabbage (*Saxifraga spathularis*).

Fir Clubmoss is one of four species of clubmoss found in Ireland, all of which are protected. Fir Clubmoss is 5-12cm tall with dark-green narrow leaves, sharp-pointed and untoothed. The young leaves tend to be brighter, lighter green. Clubmosses are amongst the oldest known plants, with fossil

records from around 400 million years ago.

St Patrick's Cabbage is one of a unique group of wildflowers native to Ireland, which originally came from the Iberian peninsula (northern Spain and Portugal) and, therefore, is known as the 'Lusitanian flora.' These plants are mainly absent from Britain. This plant grows on shady mountain cliffs and relatively unshaded south-facing slopes. It has obvious zig-zag leaves which are oval or nearly round.

If you see either of these plants while on the mountains, please take a close-up photograph and email it to: [mike@mountainresearch.net](mailto:mike@mountainresearch.net). Please include your name, the name of the mountain and the date. It would be

very helpful if you could also give a grid reference (or the 1km grid square) and the altitude or contour height where you came across the plant. If you are not good with maps, grid references and contour heights, other members of your club might be able to help.

If you can't photograph the plant, please send the location information anyway. Your help would be much appreciated and the names of all who contribute will be published in any final report. **Mike Maunsell**

► Mountain Research Ireland is happy to receive information on any clubmoss or saxifrage. See their Facebook page, **Mountain Research Ireland**, for further information ■