

## Plant "Imagination"

### *THE SHAMROCK*



The **Shamrock**, is a three-leafed plant similar to a clover, which is an unofficial symbol of Ireland and Northern Ireland. Shamrocks are said to bring good luck. This flower is related to an Irish tale of St. Patrick, which tells of how Patrick used the three-leafed shamrock to explain the Trinity. His followers adopted the custom of wearing a Shamrock on his feast day.

Three-leaf clover grows all over the world from Tasmania to South Africa and from North America to England. It's just called by some other name in those places. Indeed it could be argued that the plant doesn't grow in Ireland at all. As Charles Nelson, one of Ireland's leading botanists puts it, "Shamrock exists only on St Patrick's Day. Every other day of the year it's known simply as young clover." The shamrock has been a symbol of Irish identity for centuries and has played significant roles in both the legends and history of the Emerald Isle. According to some Irish legends, the Druids of the country's Celtic past believed the shamrock was sacred because of its three leaves, three being an important number in the Druidic religion.

The shamrock is often part of the bridal bouquet and the groom's boutonniere in Irish weddings, an inclusion that symbolizes a wish for good luck during the marriage. On St. Patrick's Day, it is part of a toasting ritual called "drowning the shamrock," according to Irish culture. It has also been the subject of poetry such as in Thomas Moore's ballad "Oh the Shamrock" of 1812 and in politically-charged songs like "The Wearin' O' The Green" of 1798.

**An Irish Country Garden** ---- A 200 year old house and a timeline of the garden changes over several years.

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