

Hedging trees and shrubs suitable for south west Scotland

Our climate is changing and the weather is becoming windier and wetter in autumn through winter and into spring. In order to protect gardens, orchards, crops and to reduce the wind chill on dwellings, it is prudent to plant hedges and shelter belts.

Mixed hedging provides food for man, bird and beast and increases local biodiversity. Hedges and shelter belts provide a useful sanctuary for wildlife and creates a corridor along which they can travel to avoid predators helping to increase their colonies.

When planning a hedge mix colour, deciduous and non deciduous, berries and nuts to create interest and diversity. Plant short, strong growing plants on the windward side of the hedge, in Dumfries and Galloway that is typically the South West, behind them plant a row of taller shrubs, then back the hedge or shelter belt with taller trees to lift the wind over the garden or field. Lower, staged planting helps protect the taller trees from wind damage.

Front row hedging plants shorter or slow growing

Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* - tough robust, hedging plant, white blossom with it's new leaves in spring known as May Blossom or White thorn, used in wedding ceremonies to ensure fertility. Red berries in autumn can be eaten but best left for the birds. Hedge is prickly so a good livestock deterrent. Prefers well drained soil. Very long lived and has always been revered for it's magical qualities.

Blackthorn/Sloe *Prunus spinosa* A large deciduous native shrub for dense boundary hedges. It is the essential ingredient of a hedge that needs to deter livestock. A thorny shrub it bears white blossom in spring and small hard blue/black fruit called 'sloes' that can be used with sugar to flavour gin, vodka or brandy.

Honey suckle *Lonicera periclymenium* Common English Wild Honey Suckle is a deciduous native honeysuckle is found in hedges and woodlands throughout England. It produces clusters of yellow tubular flowers, flushed with purple and red which appear from June to September.

Wild Rose *Rosa canina, Rosa Rugosa, Rosa Rugosa Alba(white)*

Fast growing deciduous hardy rose bushes, great for flowering in a hedge providing livestock deterrent and rose hips for jelly and Vit C rich cordial.

Juniper *Juniper communis* Slow growing evergreen. Berries can be dried and added to sauces particularly good with game, and used to flavour gin.

Box *Buxus sempervirens* dense evergreen shrub perfect for formal gardens but also useful as dense low level hedging, slow growing but easy to maintain.

Cotoneaster *Franchetti* -Semi evergreen, small clusters of white flowers, bright red berries in winter, good for seaside locations

Sea Buckthorn *Hippophae rhamnoides* Deciduous, quick growing, tolerates coastal situations, very useful as a windbreak, It is a silver leaved shrub with masses of yellow blossom and edible orange /yellow berries high in Vit.C B2 & E

Mahonia or Oregon Grape Mahonia is excellent in a hedge, it has beautifully scented flowers from Jan. to May making it a haven for bees and insects. The edible fruit can be eaten raw or cooked. Grow well on most soils and have prickly leaves to deter livestock.

Middle row taller bushier plants

Damson Merryweather A strong Damson tree that hedges well and produces blossom in spring and blue black damsons for pies and jam in autumn.

Elder *Sambucus Nigra* Fast growing deciduous tree with large clusters of white flowers in the spring used for elderflower ritters, wine, champagne! Black berries in autumn used for cordial, wine, jam, chutney rich in Vit C

Guelder Rose *Viburnum opulus* another name is Water Elder so useful deciduous shrub for boggy or waterlogged conditions. Stunning clusters of red and yellow fruits in the autumn, great for jams and jellies that will keep a long time (add lemon zest)

Hazel *Corylus Avellana* Deciduous shrub useful for a quick growing hedge. Catkins in spring, hazelnuts in the autumn, for bigger nuts choose

Common Filbert *Corylus maxima*

Willow *Salix Alba (white), chermesina (red), caprea (goat)* Deciduous fast growing, like damp soil, bees enjoy the early spring pollen. Strong straight wands can be produced for basket making and other crafts by cutting down each to the stump in January each year. Do not plant anywhere near drains as the roots will grow towards them and clog them up.

Yew *Taxus baccata* A native British evergreen, can be grown in a hedge or stand alone, slow growing. Berries are a stunning orange but are poisonous to humans. Yew leaves and clippings are used in anti cancer preparations and can be sold for that purpose – long term cash crop!

Mirabelle de Nancy – A Plum that looks well in a hedge and fruits freely likes full sun and well drained soil.

Back Row tall shrubs and trees some may be pollarded

Cherry Laurel *Prunus laurocerasus* Creates dense hedge, white flowers and berries great for wildlife, can be cut or left to grow to high tree. Fast growing, deciduous

Holly *Ilex Aquifolium* deciduous, slow growing but tolerates acid soil and has winter berries

Alder *Alnus Glutinosa* Alder is typically used for planting in wet areas, alongside river banks and streams. Alder can stand in water up to 5 inches and also takes up heavy metals so is good as a hyperaccumulator to regulate contaminated soils. Use alder wood to sharpen tools

Ash *Fraxinus Excelsior* Ash is good on moist soils even those that are seasonally waterlogged and is excellent for coastal positions. Good for wildlife for burning and pollarding.

Wild Crab Apple *Malus sylvestris* The only apple tree native to Britain widely used to help pollinate orchards. Can grow to 15 ft. Attractive white/pink blossom and fruits used for jelly, helping to set jams with a low pectin content, can be spiced and bottled and served with meat or cheese

Field Maple *Acer Campestre* a small compact tree ideal for hedgerows, yellow green flowers in spring, young leaves reddish purple dark green when mature. Useful for bees.

Wild Cherry *Prunus avium* or Gean, Deciduous spectacular spring flowering tree, Ideal as a wind break, screening or hedgerow. Beautiful single white flowers

Bird Cherry *Prunus padus* Produces bitter black cherry that birds adore, grows to 25 ft white blossom in spring, prefers well drained soil, can cope with damp soil but not waterlogged.

Rowan , Mountain Ash Deciduous tree with white blossom and clusters of orange/red berries used for jam, jelly or cordial and the birds love them. Rowan is considered to impart good luck.

For prettiness, and to help bees and pollinators add buddleia, dogwoods and lilac to your hedge.

For wildflowers, - foxglove, oxeye daisy, jack by the hedge, lady's mantle, primrose, wood anemone, milkmaids, Scottish bluebells, lady's smock etc. etc. to plant or sow under your hedge see www.Scotiaseeds.co.uk

Jools Cox
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