



Berberis

Berberis thunbergii

A natural intruder deterrent, this robust, easy to maintain, slow-growing deciduous is ideal for exposed sites, tolerating poorer soils.



Description

Elegant, compact and hardy to -20°C, the Japanese Barberry or Berberis offers a stunning array of seasonal interest, ideal for those seeking a low-level hedge with ornamental value.

Placement

Berberis grows well in virtually any well-drained soil and is tough enough to withstand both exposed inland and coastal sites, whether in full sun or partial shade.

Appearance

Smooth, 2–3cm obovate dark green leaves borne from thorny stems, are joined in spring by scented, nectar-rich yellow cupped flowers. In early autumn beautiful glossy scarlet-red berries appear, matched by a dazzling display of foliage, turning orange, red and purple before dropping in winter.

Uses

In addition to making a highly attractive formal hedge, worthy of most planting schemes, Berberis' vicious thorns ward off humans and animals alike, making it a functional security hedge also. With that in mind it is advised that protective gloves are used when pruning.



The abundance of spring flowers, rich in nectar and pollen, attract bees and other pollinating insects.



Autumnal fruits provide a welcome source of food for wildlife whilst its thorny branches offer nesting birds and mammals protection from predators.



SOIL

Well-drained
Chalk, Clay,
Sand, Loam



SUNLIGHT

Full sun
Partial shade



GROWTH

Slow growing
10–25cm/yr
approximately



PRUNING

When dormant
or late spring
after flowering



USES

Formal hedging
Security barrier
Prevents erosion



SUITABILITY

Not suitable for
livestock
Deer resistant