

October 2018: Pyracantha
Garden Plant of the Month

The glow of autumn: Pyracantha

Pyracantha (also known as firethorn) is a shrub with flaming berries in the autumn and green leaves in the winter and early spring. In May and June the plant blooms with a host of cream flowers, so that the shrub provides beauty in the garden all year round. Pyracantha likes to grow against a wall or frame, and is also suitable as a hedge plant. It's a spectacular feature plant that can make an entire wall glow with the colour of its berries.

Range

The Pyracantha range offers a rich palette of colour in the form of red, yellow and orange berries. The plant is offered in various forms: as a pyramid, as a plant tied to stakes, or growing against a frame. The most common cultivars are 'Soleil d'Or' (yellow), 'Red Column' (red), 'Orange Charmer' (vermillion), 'Orange Glow' (orange).

Pyracantha trivia

- Pyracantha's berries are not very popular with birds, which means they remain on the plant for a long time, well into winter. Only when the supply of food for birds really starts to run short will blackbirds and thrushes in particular eat the berries.
- The study thorns mean that pyracantha is not strokable, although small songbirds in particular like to hide their nest in the bush because the thorns protect them from cats.
- The thorns also provide natural protection against burglars and vandals. It's not pleasant to clamber across this plant to reach a window or get over a fence.

Origin

Pyracantha is a member of the rose family, which explains the presence of thorns, and is a close relative of the thornless Cotoneaster. This garden plant grows wild from south-east Europe to south-east Asia, and has been cultivated since the 16th century. It's widely used in gardens and parks as a colourful berry-bearing shrub because it lasts a very long time with comparatively little maintenance.

What to look for when buying

- Pyracantha should primarily be chosen for the shape. Pyracantha is offered as a plant tied to stakes, with a frame or as a ready-to-use hedging plant.
- The plants are available as a climber all year round, including without berries, but it is particularly berries that increase Pyracantha's visual value. There should be plenty of colour on display at the time of purchase.
- Pyracantha must be free of pests and diseases.

Sales and display tips

Enrich the display of the Pyracantha range of seasonal products such as a locally grown apples in crates, pumpkins, squashes and a selection of bird food and birdhouses. Because the plant in a pot does not always do justice to the effect it will have in a garden, inspirational image material as a backdrop will enhance its appeal.

Care tips for customers

- Pyracantha will do well in shade, partial shade and full sun.
- Ensure rich well-draining soil.
- Younger Pyracanthas and Pyracanthas that are used as container plants should be watered regularly. Older Pyracanthas planted in the soil can cope better with drought due to their extensive root system.
- The plant can reach a height of 4 to 5 metres and can grow quite wild. The best time for cutting back is at the end of the winter. This encourages both flowering and the formation of berries.

Garden Plant of the Month

Pyracantha is the Garden Plant for October 2018. The 'Garden Plant of the Month' is an initiative from the Flower Council of Holland. Every month the Flower Council works with representatives of the floriculture sector to choose a plant with an amazing look or unusual characteristics to put in the spotlight. Sometimes it will be a green star that's highlighted, and sometimes an undiscovered treasure that deserves to be better known and merits a place in the garden, on the patio or on the balcony. Because everyone is happier with more plants.

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Photo caption

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