APRIL 2024

NURSERY FOCUS

The importance of biosecurity

PLANT FOCUS

Mahonia

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The G Club magazine from greenwood

Coastal tolerant gardens

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Greenwood wins AIPH International Grower of the Year



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Sclub 2024 is better than ever

We're pleased to announce that in 2024, we're making G Club better than ever, with enhanced benefits, and greater rewards. Additions include Luxury event hospitality, charity of choice donation, case study collaboration, and more. To qualify for G Club benefits, all you need to do is remain within your payment terms each month of the quarter, and the level of benefits you will receive will increase in line with the value of your quarterly spend.

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Business Update



Greenwood wins AIPH International Grower of the Year:

We were absolutely delighted to have picked up not one, but three awards at the AIPH 2024 International Grower of the Year ceremony! Not only did we win in the 'Finished Plants and Trees' and 'Sustainability' categories, but we were also awarded the coveted 'Golden Rose' as the overall winners. Managing Director Melanie Asker, Commercial Director Alastair Fairbairn, and Greenwood Holland Director Jaap Huisman were there to collect the awards. "We are delighted to have won this award, which is testament to the hard work of



Greenwood gets Plant Healthy certification

We're pleased to announce that we have been awarded 'Plant Healthy' certification, following an audit of our nursery sites. The Plant Healthy Certification scheme was created by The Plant Health Alliance, which is a collective of British horticultural organisations with a united goal of promoting and enhancing plant health and biosecurity measures. The scheme is aimed at protecting plants and trees from destructive pests and diseases.

Alistair Yeomans of the Plant Health Certification Scheme said "It's fantastic having an industry leader such as Greenwood on board with the Plant Healthy initiative. We are continually evaluating what we can do to improve biosecurity, and having key operators in the industry such as Greenwood actively adhering to these standards will help ensure we protect the British landscape as effectively as possible"





Nursery Focus: The importance of biosecurity



signs of any issues. At this stage, natural preventions and very low-toxicity products can be used, with the purpose of repelling pests. This can include using insects such as Atheta (Dalotia *coriaria*), that do not feed on the plants themselves, but hunt pests such as sciarid flies that do. In nurseries, timely removal of diseased plants is imperative to saving others from the disease.

Treatment of the disease - if the pest or disease causes

The growth of the UK horticultural industry over recent years has been fuelled by the trading of plants from across Europe, as well as further afield. The UK is a major trading partner of key growing markets such as the Netherlands, Belgium, and Italy and this has opened up the market to an exponential variety of species. In trading terms this has huge economic benefits; however, it can present pest and disease risks as part of the importing process. New pests and diseases are a particularly dangerous, as indigenous plants have no built up evolutionary natural immunity to these threats and so they present even more of a risk to plant life and biodiversity than native pests and diseases. This is why biosecurity must be taken seriously, our entire ecosystem depends on it.

Plant health requires three different types of action to avoid problems.

Prevention - day in and day out, plants need to be provided with care, with regular watering, pruning, as well as products that stimulate their growth by boosting their natural defence mechanisms. This includes natural products such as Oenosan, which is lime-based and helps protect plants from diseases as well as allowing it to thrive.

Early intervention - By regularly inspecting plants, prompt action can be taken at the first

enough damage to a specimen, it is necessary to intervene with treatments capable of destroying them, while avoiding products that may also harm the environment. For example by treating an aphid outbreak with macerated garlic.

It is important to understand the type of problem before choosing the right insecticide or fungicide. Organic insecticides and fungicides can be as effective when used properly as conventional ones. If plants are always well fed, well cared for, and chosen according to environmental and climatic conditions, they will be less susceptible to these invasions.

In recent years, there has been an increase in insect infestations, as well as fungal, viral and bacterial diseases. The increase has been caused by the increased volume of plants imported into the UK, as well as factors such as climate change enabling different types of invasive organisms to thrive geographical areas that they couldn't previously tolerate.

Plant pests as aphids, thrips, and mites are much easier to manage than plant diseases as moulds, fungi, and viruses. Plant pests usually only affect ornamental plants from spring until early autumn, while plant diseases can occur at any time of the year. The introduction and spread of non-indigenous pests however, pose a serious threat because of the potential, extreme economic, social and environmental consequences.

Biosecurity plays a crucial role in protecting our native plants and the environment. In recent years, the UK has faced devastating effects caused by a range of pests that have emerged from abroad. Biosecurity involves taking precautions to prevent the introduction and spread of harmful organisms. Examples of pests include the *Thaumetopoea processionea* (oak processionary moth), *Thaumetopoea pityocampa* (pine processionary moth), and the fungus *Hymenoscyphus fraxienus*, which is responsible for ash dieback.

The Plant Health Certification Scheme is an important tool in plant biosecurity aimed at protecting ornamental plants and the

environment from destructive pests and diseases. Horticultural businesses can be accredited as 'plant healthy' by demonstrating their ability to operate to a set of standards that minimises the risk of pest and disease spread. Businesses with 'Plant Healthy' accreditation can formally demonstrate their compliance with plant health management standards. Greenwood Plants has recently received this prestigious 'Plant Healthy certification, a testament to our steadfast

dedication to biosecurity. This accreditation comes after a thorough audit of our six UK nursery locations, and we couldn't be prouder.

The main objective of the scheme is to reduce the risk of introduction and spread of destructive plant pests through plant supply chains, thereby protecting the horticulture industry, other crop plants and natural habitats. In addition, the scheme aims to easily identify companies and organisations that handle plant material according to high standards of plant health and biosecurity.

The Plant Health Management Standard, on which the certification scheme is based, was developed by specialists from industry, government and non-profit horticultural organisations. The certification system is managed by the Plant Health Alliance, who are committed to ensuring that standards are fit for purpose, based on the latest evidence, and updated regularly to ensure they remain relevant. To support this, a technical advisory group was established to periodically review the Plant Health Management Standard, ensuring that the requirements are aligned with best practices and the latest scientific findings in plant biosecurity.

Requirements in the Plant Health Management Standard include having a clear biosecurity policy, which is widely distributed and adhered to by employees, outlining the commitment to the preservation of biosecurity when importing, growing on nurseries, and dispatching plants and trees. It includes requirements for risk analysis, supply chain management, hygiene and housekeeping, monitoring and assessment, as well as training and recognition for all staff. Only business which can confidently demonstrate their ability to adhere to these requirements will be awarded 'Plant Healthy' accreditation.



Here at Greenwood, we believe that Every Plant Matters and our goal is to make sure every plant on our nurseries, whether grown or imported, can thrive without being plagued by pests or disease. We keep a comprehensive inventory of plant species most susceptible to pests and diseases and we are continually updating it as we deepen our understanding, using it as a tool for ongoing vigilance. Control measures are in place to manage potentially destructive pests. Upon identification of new pest risks, immediate and decisive action is taken to contain their spread. The approach goes beyond identification however; we carefully evaluate possible entry points and potential routes of pest spread, through rigorous inspection protocols that are meticulously executed to intercept and contain any emerging issues. Ensuring our G Team is prepared, and educated on the biggest risks, is of paramount importance to enforcing a substantial biosecurity policy.

- Giulia Dattis Creative Director

Environmental benefits of plants

Exploring the specific reasons why plants are so important for biodiversity, climate change, and more.

Plants first emerged on Earth around 500 million years ago, 494 million years before people. They bring tranquillity and peace, stimulate senses, provide calm, and are scientifically proven to reduce stress. It is widely accepted as fact that plants have an essential role in combatting climate change and benefiting the environment, but it might not be completely obvious as to why. In this article we are going to explore a few of the exact ways in which plants provide us with environmental benefits; whether it's wildlife, carbon emissions, or water management.

One of the biggest benefits of plant life, trees especially, is their function of taking in carbon dioxide and producing oxygen in return. Carbon dioxide



is formed from the burning and extraction of fossil fuels, and while being important in regard of absorbing and releasing heat from the earth's surface, it has damaging consequences. One of these being the greenhouse effect, where gases such as carbon dioxide build up in the atmosphere, causing the Earth to become warmer than it would be naturally. This, combined with the sharp increase in CO2 emissions, is the primary cause of global warming. A higher global temperature causes polar ice caps to melt, rising sea levels, then widespread flooding and habitat loss, as well as more extreme and unpredictable weather. Trying to reverse the greenhouse effect and reduce the impact of climate change is the very reason why carbon emissions must be controlled.

Carbon sequestration occurs naturally in plants, where carbon dioxide is absorbed and stored during photosynthesis, as well as through carbon capture and storage (CSS) when CO2 is separated from other gases in industrial emissions, then reduced and stored. Plant-rich landscapes like forests capture approximately 25% of carbon emissions globally. Protecting forests and planting more trees worldwide is crucial for maximising carbon sequestration and combatting climate change. It is said that roughly 1.5 million hectares of additional woodland are needed to achieve net zero carbon emissions.

> Urban flooding damages buildings, vehicles, and infrastructure, causing power cuts and water pollution. It destroys natural habitats, uproots trees, and pollutes rivers, sometimes posing severe consequences like loss of life. In urban areas, roads and pavements cause rapid water runoff, leading to flooding without suitable drainage systems. Cities spend a lot of money to prevent flooding, whereas natural areas absorb water through roots and distribute it through the plant's

vascular system. Plants manage stormwater runoff, preventing flooding, and reducing city costs on maintenance and pumping excessive runoff.

A major environmental benefit of plants is the promotion of biodiversity. This is important for the environment for many different reasons: It helps support healthy ecosystems, creates fertile soil, and various other benefits, including the overall health and survival of all living organisms. It also provides vital support to ecosystems through pollination, seed distribution, climate regulation, purifying water, and more. Unfortunately, there are threats to biodiversity as a result of human activity, such as pollution, climate change, and more, all of which causes ecosystems to fall apart.

Whilst decaying plants and trees do emit carbon into the atmosphere, there is a direct benefit to health of the soil beneath, even after a plant has died. Dead plants release nutrients into the soil through the process of decomposition. The build-up of decayed plant material provides healthy, fertile soil for more plants to grow. When plants decompose in the same soil where they grew, nutrients and minerals return to the soil, preparing it for new plant life, a process called mineralisation. The continuous breakdown cycle serves as a slowrelease fertiliser, always providing plants with essential nutrients. Allowing dead plant matter to decompose in place, enhances the fertility of soils.

Using native plants, which occur naturally within a particular area, is a great way of maximising the environmental benefits when planting a garden scheme. Native plants have co-evolved with native wildlife and support these local ecological systems. When selecting plants, it's essential to consider future climatic conditions, given the dramatic shifts caused by climate change. Choosing hardy, drought-tolerant species suited to higher temperatures will future-proof green spaces. We can ensure there are green spaces capable of surviving the



future climate, by planting drought tolerant, hardy species such as *Abelia* × grandiflora, *Ceanothus*, and *Hylotelephium*, which are capable of withstanding the challenges posed by rising temperatures.

Planting using peat-free compost is one of the biggest ways a landscaper or plant grower can make a positive difference to the environment long term. In their natural state, peatlands are capable of sequestering 33% of global carbon emissions, and storing them in the ground, preventing their contribution to the greenhouse effect. We damage the peatlands when harvesting peat, the carbon stored in the ground gets released into the atmosphere, and the peatlands become less effective at further sequestering carbon dioxide. With less than 20% of the UK's peatlands remaining in a near-natural state, it becomes imperative to seek alternatives. We have taken a significant step by transitioning to growing 100% peat-free, using alternative materials such as coir, and tree bark, in order to grow plants whilst using regenerative materials with a much smaller impact on carbon emissions.

- Lara Wickland

Marketing Assistant

Plant Focus: Mahonia



n this edition of G Talk we are focusing on the striking evergreen shrub, Mahonia. Mahonia is a genus that contains approximately 70 species of plants. These consist mainly of shrubs, but also contains a few species of small trees. It's often known by its more common English name 'Oregon Grape', referring to the dark berries it grows in Autumn. Most species are native to North and Central America, as well as parts of Eastern Asia, and Japan. The split nativity of Mahonia was likely caused by the breakup of the continents. Whilst they may have grown in a single cluster millions of years ago, the continental drift that separated Asia and America would have likely left some species of the Mahonia genus on either side, to grow and evolve independently.

Mahonia is known for its tough, spiny, evergreen leaves, which provide striking year-round interest, and its spikes of bright yellow flowers in winter that shoot upwards, providing visual interest in seasons where colour is not common. Mahonia plants can grow up to between 1.5-4 metres in height, with some species being ideal for lower ground covering due to their larger spread of foliage, and others well suited to being at the back borders thanks to their upright growth habits. They thrive in well drained soils, and whilst they prefer partial shade, they will tolerate full sun or deep shade. Be sure to plant them in an area with a reasonable degree of shelter from the elements as cold, icy winds can cause some damage to the foliage of these plants.

Some of our favourite varieties of *Mahonia* include: *Mahonia aquifolium*, *Mahonia* × *media*

Mahonia x media 'Charity'

'Charity', *Mahonia × media '*Winter Sun', and *Mahonia nitens* 'Cabaret'.

Mahonia aquifolium is a low spreading, evergreen shrub, with particularly prickly foliage, that produces clusters of yellow flowers in winter, and reaches a maximum height of 1m.

The fruits are edible, but need some sweetening for human palettes. *Mahonia x media* 'Charity' is an upright evergreen shrub that can grow up to 4m tall. Its leaves are pinnate, and contain up to 21 leaflets on either side. Tall spires of yellow flowers up to 35cm grow upwards during the late Autumn and early Winter. *Mahonia × media* 'Winter Sun' is a medium sized bushy, evergreen shrub which has a tendency to grow upright. It produces small, fragrant yellow flowers in winter, that turn to ornamental blue-black berries afterwards. *Mahonia nitens* 'Cabaret' is a compact, upright shrub with glossy, dark green foliage. Intriguingly it can produce



Mahonia eurybracteata 'Soft Caress'



Mahonia aquifolium

autumn and winter. Try to avoid continually wet soil with *Mahonia*, as this may cause damage to the plant. No regular pruning is required, but extended shoots on *Mahonia x media* can be cut back to a sideshoot or a rosette of foliage after flowering to improve their shape. *Mahonia aquifolium* may need occasional shaping, so be sure to prune when required with this species. Mulch in autumn with weed-free organic matter, and remove any dead, damaged, or diseased branches on a regular basis. *Mahonia* plants can be propagated by seed, division, or stem cuttings, and will provide best results when propagated in the spring or autumn.

Generally, *Mahonia* species are pest and disease-free, however some species can be susceptible to certain stem rusts, in particular 'cereal rust'. This is caused by a fungus called *Puccinia graminis*, and causes discolouring of the branches and stems of the plant, turning them a crimson/brown colour, hence the name 'rust'. If spotted, the best course of action is to cut away any infected stems/leaves at the earliest sign, and dispose of them far away from other plant life. The best course of action to prevent rust developing is to ensure the plants have proper airflow, and to avoid watering anywhere but the base of the plants.

Overall, we think *Mahonia* is an excellent evergreen shrub that provides year-round interest for any landscape or garden with its flowers, berries, and fruits, contrasted by its dark green foliage.

- Chris Williams

Marketing Manager

orange coloured flowers, in contrast to most other species in the genus, during summer and autumn, and blueish-grey berries follow in winter.

When planting *Mahonia*, the best time to do so is in the autumn or early spring, when the soil is moist and temperatures are cool. To prepare the planting area, combine organic matter within the soil to enhance its moisture retention capability and improve drainage. Dig a hole that is twice the size of the root ball and mix in some compost or organic matter to improve soil fertility. *Mahonia* prefer well-drained soil and partial to full shade. They can tolerate some sun, but too much can scorch their leaves. Choose a site that is protected from strong winds, as they can damage the plant. Mahonia plants prefer consistent moisture but are quite hardy, and can tolerate periods of drought once established. Water deeply once a week during the growing season and reduce watering in the

Planting Inspiration: Coastal tolerant

gardens

oastal gardens are a unique blend of natural beauty and challenging environmental conditions. With salty sea air, sandy soils, and strong winds, these gardens demand resilient and salt-tolerant plant species. Fortunately, the UK has a plethora of stunning native and adapted plants that thrive in coastal areas, adding charm and character to seaside landscapes.

There is a unique combination of challenges to be considered when 210 planning a seaside garden. The coastal breeze carries salt particles that can damage plant foliage and roots. Salt accumulation in the soil can inhibit water

Elevation



Play



uptake, leading to dehydration in plants. Wind can exacerbate the effects of salt on plants as well as causing damage to delicate plants, breaking branches, and hindering growth.

Coastal areas are susceptible to soil erosion due to wind and waves. This can be detrimental to plant stability and health. The soils are typically sandy meaning they drain quickly and struggle to retain moisture and nutrients. This makes it harder for plants to establish deep roots and access the necessary nutrients. These regions often face water scarcity issues, and restrictions on irrigation may be experienced during droughts. Coastal gardens lend themselves to a top dressing of shingle or gravel which will help to conserve soil moisture, lessening the effect of drying winds.

Overcoming these environmental challenges requires a combination of careful plant selection, soil improvement, and ongoing maintenance. Providing windbreaks, applying organic mulch, and incorporating salt-tolerant plants are strategies that can help. Additionally, regularly monitoring soil quality and providing irrigation whilst plants get established are essential for success.

On the plus side, coastal areas tend to experience milder winters, because the sea retains heat and has a warming effect on the coastline. This allows opportunities to plant varieties that are not hardy enough for higher altitudes and cooler climates.

A good starting point, when planning a coastal planting scheme, is to include a hedge or some mixed shrubs to create a wind-filtering shelter



Phormium 'Evening Glow'

belt. A windbreak can reduce the breeze on its sheltered side, for a distance of ten times its height, which allows a wider variety of plants to establish in its shelter.

Escallonia 'Apple Blossom' **(1)**, with its compact form and glossy, crimped foliage, it serves as a steadfast hedge, adorned with racemes of delicate pink and white flowers, a charming spectacle from summer through autumn. Its resilience to coastal winds makes it an ideal choice, whether gracing a shrub border or adorning a cottage garden retreat.

Libertia grandiflora (2) is next to it with its clumps of dark green, sword-like leaves, punctuated by upright stems bearing elegant white flowers. Moving forward, the *Hydrangea macrophylla* (3), thanks to its ability to withstand sandy soils and coastal winds makes it a cherished addition, lending its beauty to gardens by the sea. *Hypericum* 'Hidcote' (4) offers a burst of sunshine with its evergreen foliage and golden-yellow cupshaped flowers. In the heart of our coastal garden lies the *Potentilla fruticosa* 'Elizabeth' (5), a compact shrub adorned with saucer-shaped yellow flowers.



Seslaria autumnalis

Standing in the middle of the border, the Phormium 'Evening Glow' (6) stands out with its upright stance and bronze-edged, pink-striped foliage. Resilient to urban pollution and coastal winds, it adds a touch of colour captivating focal point. Flanking its sides, the Anemone × hybrida 'Honorine Jobert' (7) emerges with its late summer blooms, showcasing large, pure white flowers against a backdrop of dark green foliage. Nearby, the Seslaria autumnalis (8) enhances the garden with its dense, evergreen foliage and silver-cream flowers. Just in front of it, the Achillea 'Moonshine' (9) adds a pop of colour with its canary yellow flowers. Its drought tolerance and resilience make it a perfect choice for any coastal garden. At the forefront of the garden the ruby red flowers and vibrant red stems of the Astrantia major 'Ruby Star' (10) are a great display from June through September. Alchemilla mollis (11), next to the Astantia on the left, has bright green leaves, that add a resilient presence in the coastal landscape. Genista lydia (12) enchants with its compact form and clusters of bright yellow flowers, and, completing the ensemble, the Sedum 'Autumn Joy' (13) adds structure and colour with its salmon pink flowerheads, transitioning to a stunning pinkbronze hue.



Sedum 'Autumn Joy'

Whilst coastal gardening may present its share of obstacles, the rewards of creating a picturesque garden are well worth the effort. These robust plants not only survive the seaside's challenges but their striking appearances also enhance the natural beauty of coastal gardens, turning them into tranquil havens for both gardeners and nature enthusiasts.



Planting inspiration

Scan this QR code to view more planting inspirations on our website.

Biodiversity Net Gain



On 12th February, the new Biodiversity Net Gain policy for developers came into effect. It's new government legislation regarding land development across England, stating that all planning permissions must deliver a biodiversity net gain of at least 10%. It was first introduced as a concept in the National Planning Policy Framework in 2012 and has now been made mandatory under the Environmental Act 2021.

Biodiversity is the variety of animal and plant life within a habitat, and plays a crucial role for both humans and the planet. It is important for a landscape to have a diverse habitat, as when different species coexist, it means there's more stability and resilience to environmental changes.

Biodiverse landscapes can provide more than just protection against extinction and disease though, they also offer a variety of food sources, for wildlife, and humans. A greater variety of food means less reliance on the survival of a single crop, and ensures the availability of food for wildlife year round. Ensuring the future of our green spaces through biodiversity will have a number of other benefits, most notably assisting in combatting climate change, through the carbon sequestration of plants and trees. The average tree is capable of sequestering around 20Kg of carbon at one time.

Biodiversity loss happens when there is a decrease in the variety species in an ecosystem. All over the world, biodiversity has been reduced because of several reasons, including an increase in the use of fossil fuels, urban development, and deforestation for timber and farmland. Biodiversity loss affects whole biological communities, and when crucial species disappear, it disrupts whole ecosystems' functioning.

This is why the government in the UK is introducing Biodiversity Net Gain. The measures are aiming to protect and enhance the variety of species, habitats, and ecosystems. It ensures that we have healthy ecosystems, maintains soil health, mitigates climate change, and is used for many of our medicines and over health and well-being.

Biodiversity Net Gain is government legislation that states that every development must positively increase the biodiversity of the surrounding area by at least 10%. It ensures that natural habitats are preserved and improved after development and that development projects make positive contributions to the overall ecological balance. Developers will be required to clearly show how their plans will increase the biodiversity value of each site. In order to show this, the government has provided a 'statutory biodiversity metric tool' which will be used to prove that this has been accurately measured. It takes into consideration the habitat size, quality, location, and type. Biodiversity Net Gain will be mandatory for all new planning applications for major developments under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, except for notable exemptions. By making it mandatory, the new rules will force developers to be mindful of biodiversity when in the planning stage of all projects. It will require developers to carefully plan the inclusion of green spaces in each project, and ensure there is enough native planting to attract native wildlife. This will likely involve additional costs and logistical challenges for developers, and will also take more time when planning. They will need to measure the habitats' current biodiversity value and find ways of achieving BNG using the metric tool.

When designing sites, it is important for developers to include a wide variety of plant species to create a rich and varied habitat to support biodiversity. It is a good idea to prioritise native plants and animals that have adapted to the local environment and climate. These native species support local ecosystems and provide food and shelter for wildlife. Native trees, such as Quercus robur (English oak), Pinus sylvestris (Scots pine), Corvlus avellana (hazel), and Fraxinus excelsior (ash), all originated in Britain over 10,000 years ago. During this time, insects and animals have evolved alongside these native species, supporting one another most effectively, and increasing survival rates.

provide food and cover for small mammals and birds, herbaceous plants attract pollinators and insects, and groundcovers protect and sustain soil organisms.

Developers will also incorporate features such as bird boxes, insect hotels, and wildflower meadows, as well as fruit-bearing trees and shrubs for wildlife. Bird boxes provide safe nesting sites for lots of different bird species, especially in urban areas where natural nesting sites are scarce, and becoming more so. Insect hotels attract insects such as bees, ladybirds, and lacewings, giving them a safe shelter and aiding in their survival. They play essential roles in pollination, pest control, and nutrient cycling, actively contributing to the biodiversity of their habitats. Planting wildflower meadows helps to provide nectar, pollen, and shelter, as well as attracting butterflies, bees, spiders, millipedes and other essential pollinators, a wildflower meadow can often contain over 100 different species of wildflowers.

To encourage bees and other pollinators, choosing a variety of spring, summer, autumn, and winter flowering plants, will ensure there is a constant supply of nectar and pollen throughout the year. Bees are currently under threat due to habitat loss caused climate change, as well as a reduction in plant variety, and increased pesticide use. They are essential to the life cycle of a large number of plants and trees that support wildlife, and they assist in producing a third of the worlds food supply, so it is crucial that we ensure green spaces encourage thriving bee populations.

Although Biodiversity Net Gain alone can't

solve the biodiversity crisis, it has the potential to help mitigate further damage. It is vital for balancing development with environmental conservation, safeguarding our natural heritage for future generations.

> - Lara Wickland Marketing Assistant

Another way developers will design their sites to increase biodiversity is by designing vertical and horizontal layers in a landscape, incorporating diverse habitats such as grasslands, woodlands, wetlands, and meadows. Including different layers into landscapes maximises biodiversity of the area as canopy trees offer nesting sites for birds as well as shelter for insects, shrubs

Nursery Focus:

Potting at Greenwood

Behind the scenes of our potting process.



Our first potting of 2024 has begun! OAt Greenwood, we prioritize clear communication and understanding among all members of the G team, at every stage of our operations. This commitment guarantees meticulous attention to detail, and ensures a high level of accuracy. This begins the moment plants are propagated, through to when they are shipped. As you can imagine, there are numerous essential steps in between. In this blog, we are going to talk through our potting process in a bit more detail, to provide insight into our methods and practices.

Before we start potting, we check that everything is in perfect working order. Our machines and lines are thoroughly checked to guarantee smooth operation. A list is compiled of what plants are going to be potted, and a date is chosen for when potting is going to commence, as well as where it'll take place. Currently we are potting at our Fresh Acres and Highleigh nurseries, but throughout the year we pot at Mapletree, Willaston, and Woodpecker too. Once the location has been determined, we gather all necessary supplies which are compost, bark, and pots. A plan is formulated detailing the estimated duration, the quantity of plants to be potted, and the daily target. When we are sure that everything is prepared, we commence potting.

Firstly, a bale breaker is used to break apart compacted bales of growing medium materials, into smaller, more manageable pieces. This helps to loosen the material and prepare it for use in the potting mix, ensuring proper aeration and drainage for the plants being potted.



A potting machine is then used to fill the pots with this growing medium, and plant seedlings or plants into them. This speeds up the potting process, ensuring uniformity and efficiency in transplanting each plant into containers.

After the pots have been through the potting machine, they are transported along lines equipped with moving belts. These lines lead to a designated section of the greenhouse, where one of the G team stands at the end using a pot spacing fork to separate the pots from the line.



With a team of four dedicated individuals, we aim to pot efficiently while maintaining the highest standards of quality. They also oversee that the machines are operating smoothly. Each plant is potted with precision. We make sure that there is straight alignment in the pot, that it's thoroughly covered with bark using the bark machine, and that it's properly placed in the beds using pot spacing forks. These also increase efficiency as they can handle multiple pots simultaneously, rather than one by one. These forks not only simplify the potting process significantly, but also optimise space.

Immediately after potting, the plants must be watered. This is so that the plant gets all the moisture it needs to survive. To track our progress and ensure accountability, every batch of potted plants is signed off at the start and end of the process. This also helps us to maintain consistency and quality.

After a while, these plants will need repotting. We always check the plants to make sure they have roots, and when they are rooted properly, we know it's time to repot them. This means each plant can continue to thrive with healthy growth and development.

Our potting process is all about precision, care, and dedication. From meticulous preparation to execution, every step is taken to ensure that each plant receives the attention it needs. As we say, every plant matters!

- Lara Wickland Marketing Assistant

Understanding Latin names

A definitive guide to the Latin names of plants, and how they can inform you.



Within the horticultural industry, plants are nearly always referred to by their Latin names. Even if they're known by much more widely used common names, like 'Holly', the industry will still almost exclusively refer to their Latin or scientific name, which for common holly is of course *llex aquifolium*. Given that there are over 500 different species of plant all part of the same genus, a lot of which are sold commercially as part of the same being specific is very important! The Latin (or botanical) names enable us to be far more precise when referring to specific species of plant, especially when there are multiple varieties of similar plants deriving from the same genus, which in this case is *llex*.

Common names for plants can alter between different cultures, as different languages will have their own term for the same plant. For example, in the UK, an English oak tree is referred to commonly as Oak. In France however, it is called'chêne pédoncule', and in Spanish it is referred to it as 'roble'. This is why having one universal official name for a plant clears up any ambiguity and ensure the collective referal of the correct term for the correct species which in the case of an oak tree is *Quercus*.

However, the botanical names for plants actually can provide us with a lot more than specificity. The names can tell you a great deal about the species of plant that they're describing, including their place of origin, growth characteristics leaf or flower colour, its flowering season, and so much more. Understanding the botanical names of plants can help visualise a plant, pick out key characteristics, and this can be incredibly helpful when looking at substitutions, ordering, and the fulfilment of plating scheme requirements.

Botanical plant names can technically begin as broadly as identifying the kingdom the plant lies within, which for nearly everything is *Plantae*, before specifying the subkingdom, super-division, division, class and so on, until the name becomes nine or ten words long! Generally in horticulture we refer to genus, species, variety and cultivar. To fully understand the difference between these four terms in a plant name, let's take *Viburnum tinus* 'Eve Price' as an example, and break down the parts of this name that form the whole.

The 'genus' is a group of plants with similar characteristics, which in the example above is Viburnum. There are many different species of plants that are all grouped within the Viburnum Genus. The 'species' is a subdivision within the genus of a plant identifying a more specific type, which, in the particular example, is tinus. Other species of Viburnum include lantana, and opulus, that possess slightly different characteristics to one another, but fundamentally are all related genetically. The 'variety' is a further subdivision within the species and is a naturally occurring variation of that plant. It could have a different shaped leaf, different coloured stem or larger flower for example. Similarly, a 'Cultivar' is a manmade variation of the plant, possibly produced by cross pollination, grafting, selection of a particular characteristic or other hybridisation techniques.

From this explanation, it can be deduced that 'Eve Price' is either a variety, or a Cultivar, but how do we tell which is which? It's actually quite simple. A 'Cultivar' will always be capitalised, non-italicised, and in inverted commas, whereas a variety will always be italicised, and have no capital letter in its name. Often, it will also be followed by the abbreviation 'var.' Therefore, we can deduce that 'Eve Price' is a Cultivar, rather than a naturally occurring variety.

Whilst the botanical names offer us more precision and accuracy when referring to particular species of plants, there is more information about the plant within the name, that can serve as clues to a plant's origin, growing habits, colour, and foliage type. Of course, there are thousands of examples of descriptors in Latin or other languages within the botanical names of plants, but below we've split some of the most commonly used into categories, by what they indicate about the species of plant.

Plants named after their discoverers

A lot of the plants we know today have resulted from the activities of Victorian plant hunters bringing back seeds and plants from expeditions across the world. Many of these plant hunters now have plant species named after them, whether they discovered them or not! Among these, there are a number of prominent names that appear often, particularly within the commercial landscaping industry:

Fortunei – Robert Fortune was a Scottish botanist who introduced over 250 plants from China and Japan into Britain, Australia, and the USA.

Hookeri/hookeriana – Sir Joseph Dalton Hooker was a British botanist and explorer, known for being a very close friend of Charles Darwin's. His most notable discoveries occurred on expeditions to the Himalayas and India.

Forestii – George Forrest was a Scottish botanist, most known for his expeditions to the incredibly biodiverse Yunman province of China, where he brought back an estimated 31,000 plant specemins!

Davidii – Père Armand David was a French priest who travelled to China to try and convert the populace to Catholicism, but became fascinated with the diverse nature of the country.

Wilsonii – Ernest Wilson was a British plant collector who introduced around 2000 Asian plant species to the West, of which around sixty are named after him.



Euonymus fortunei 'Emerald Gaiety'

Geographical origins

Plants can also be named after the location from which they originate, are native to, or where they were first discovered by Western botanists.

Australis – refers to the Southern Hemisphere, sometimes more specifically Australia or New Zealand.

Japonica – refers to Japan or more generally the far East.

Occidentalis - refers to the Western hemisphere.

Orientalis – refers to Eastern hemisphere.

Africanus – refers to the African continent.

Asiatica - refers to the Asian continent.

Europaeus – refers to the European continent.

Sinensis/chinensis – refers to China and the surrounding area.

Plant habitats

Plants' name can also tell you about the particular habitat in which they grow natively, which can be useful to landscapers and architects to quickly identify a plant's suitability to a certain environment. For example, if the name refers to being of woodland origin, you can identify quite quickly that the plant thrives in partial shade, as it naturally grows under the canopy of trees.

Montana/montanum – Refers to plants from mountainous areas.

Aquatica – Refers to wetlands, or damp areas, such as pond margins, or in water.

Sylvatica – Refers to plants that grow in woodlands or forests.

Littoralis – Refers to plants that occur naturally on shorelines, or in coastal areas.

Campestre/campestris – refers to flatlands, such as fields or meadows.

Grisellinia littoralis



Plant forms and growth types

A plant's species or Cultivar name can indicate how it grows, and this can be vital information when designing a garden, especially if you're expecting upright growth, or density of habit.

Fastigiata – Means 'upright' or 'columnar', and applies to plants with branches and stems that grow upward rather than outward.

Prostratus – refers to plants that are low spreading or flat growing.

Repens/reptans/procumbens – All three are different ways to refer to plants that are low growing. Reptans is the Latin for 'crawling', whilst procumbens translates to 'fall' or 'lean forward'.

Sempervirens – The literal English translation from Latin is 'always living', and refers to plants whose foliage is evergreen.

Fruticosa – The Latin word for 'shrubby', and refers to plants with a habit of growing in a dense, 'bushy' form.

Pumila – Meaning 'small' or 'dwarf', and refers to plants with a smaller growth height than usual for the particular genus.

Arboreus – Refers to plants that grow upright and tall like trees, particularly in comparison to other species in the Genus.

Macrorrhizum – Refers to plants that have a tendency to grow large roots.

Baccata – Translates from Latin to mean plants that produce berries.

Foliage type, size and shape

Within commercial landscaping foliage can be one of the most important aesthetic elements of a plant, particularly in evergreens, as it provides much of the interest in the design year-round. Certain plant Genera can contain species that differ greatly in the size and shape of their foliage, so indicators as to the look of foliage can be valuable when determining a plants suitability or accuracy, particularly when substituting available plants on an order.

Salicifolia – Translates to 'willow' shaped leaves, as the Latin name for willow is E.g. Hebe salicifolia.

Macrophylla/macrophyllus – Plants with this name have large leaves. 'Macro' is Latin for large, and 'phylla' or 'phyllus' refers to plant leaves.

Microphulla/microphyllus – In contrast to the above, this means a plant has small leaves.

Ovalifolium – This means 'oval shaped leaves'. Folium is the Latin word for a thin, leaflike structure.

Quercifolia – Translates to 'Oak like leaves', as 'Quercus' is the Latin name for Oak.

Rotundifolia – Derived from the Latin word 'rotundi' which means round.

Angustifolia – Refers to plants with narrow leaves. Angustus is the Latin word for narrow. `

Tenuifolium – Another name for narrow leaves, derived from 'tenu' which is Latin for 'thin'.

Aquifolium – Refers to plants with pointed or prickly leaves. Comes from the Latin word 'acus', meaning 'needle'.

Quinquefolia – Meaning 'five leaves', and is indicative of a plant with five stems to each leaf.

Aesculifolia – Plants with leaves shaped like those of the horse chestnut. Aescululs is the Latin word for the horse chestnut tree.

Albomarginatus – Refers to foliage that have a white border around the edge of the leaf.

Flower types and shapes

As well as the leaves of a plant, the name can also indicate the different types and shape of the flowers. This can be valuable information to help get a better understanding of what the plant's flowers will look like, even if the plant is not in season.

Grandiflora – Translates to large flowers. E.g. *Magnolia grandiflora. Macrantha* also translates to the same.

Stellata – Latin word for 'star'. Refers to plants with 'star-like' flowers.

Pauciflora – 'Pauci' is Latin for 'few'. Refers to plants that do not produce a lot of flowers.

Florida – Latin for 'flowering'. Refers to plants that produce flowers, or produce a lot of flowers.

Tulipifera – Refers to plants that produce 'tulip-like' flowers.

Flora Plena – Refers to plants that are 'double flowered', meaning the flowers have extra petals. Derives from the Latin for 'with full flower'.



Escallonia rubra

Plant, leaf and flower colours

Lastly, a plant's name can also give an indication of the colour of either the flowers, the foliage, or even the stems. Having a solid grasp on the various Latin colours used in plant names can help very quickly identify a particular variance of plant. Often with colours, rather than a variety, or a Cultivar, you'll have another sub-category of the plant's name beyond the species, called the 'forma', which is where you may see an f. in the middle of the name. **Sanguinea/sanguineum** – Latin word for 'blood-red'. Generally used in reference to red stems.

Argenteum/Argentea – From the Latin for 'of money', or 'of silver', and refers to 'silvery' plants.

Alba – Latin word for 'white', and generally is used to refer to white flowers.

Atropurpurea – Means 'dark purple' and normally is referring to purple flowers.

Caerulae – Refers to plants with blue leaves in particular. From the latin which can also mean 'of sky', or 'of sea'.

Aurea – Derived from the Latin word for 'gold'. Refers in particular to gold or yellow stems.

Nigra – Translates to 'black', but normally in the plant world this is a dark brown or purple, rather than a deep black colour.

Rubra – Latin word for 'red', and often refers to particularly fiery red leaves in autumn.

Coccinea – Translates to 'scarlett', and often refers to either the berries or flowers of plants.

Virens – Meaning 'green' or 'fresh', and generally refers to a plant's green foliage.

Using this information, we can take a long latin plant name, such as *Euonymus japonicus* 'Microphyllus Albomarginatus', and begin to break down what that means, and what identifying features we're looking for with this particular plant. Firstly, *Euonymus* is the *Genus*, and *japonicus* as we have learned refers to plants that originated in either Japan or the far east in general. *Microphyllus* means small leaves, and *albomarginatus* refers to plants with a white border around their leaves. Therefore, we know that with this plant we're looking for a *Euonymus* originating from Japan, that has small leaves with white borders around them.

Alternatively, let's look at *Taxus baccata* 'Fastigiata Aurea'. From the information above, we can confirm we're looking for a berry producing plant (*baccata*) that grows upright (*fastigiata*) and grows yellow coloured foliage (*aurea*).

- Chris Williams Marketing Manager

Community

An update on our recent donations



2024 has already begun with a flourish for Greenwood Community, our outreach program that donates plants to worthy causes, to give back to our local community and to help encourage biodiversity. We're aiming to make 24 community donations in 2024, and we've already been incredibly busy with our donations, even in the winter months! Five donations have already been collected on behalf of various organisations, and several more are already planned for the coming weeks and months..

Our first donation of 2024 went to a brand new project being led by **Barnham parish council**. We supplied a selection of mixed shrubs and herbaceous plants to their new community garden back in February of this year. The project is run exclusively by volunteers, who want to develop a green space for the local community to enjoy.

Our initial donation is the first of what we're hoping to be a fruitful ongoing partnership as the garden progresses, and we're excited to see what the future brings to this local project.

Our second donation this year was to **Chestnut Tree House**, a children's hospice located near Arundel, that is connected to the larger St Barnabas Hospice, to which we have donated in the past. The Hospice was built in 2001, and provides a safe place and care for children with terminal illnesses. Between families' own homes and the hospice itself, Chestnut Tree House cares for around 300 children a year, providing much needed support and care.

Towards the end of February, the **Chichester Youth Adv**. Trust collected their latest donation from Greenwood Community. The donation has gone to their hostel and activity centre, located at the heart of the Breacon Beacons in Wales, a project to which we sent a donation last year. This time, we donated a number of young trees, to be planted on a plot of land that is being turned into a woodland area. It is hoped that by adding trees and plants to this plot of land, it will encourage biodiversity, and bring more wildlife into the green space.

In March of this year, we donated a variety plants to the **Philip Howard Catholic School in Barnham**. The school is situated very near to our Fresh Acres nursery site, and is at the heart of the local community, from which many of our team benefit. The plants will be used to create a garden for the children to enjoy, improving the local green spaces, helping to encourage wildlife to the area, and increasing biodiversity.

Our fifth community donation of the year was to North Mundham Primary School near Chichester. The school was first opened in 1875 and has served the local community ever since. In recent years, they operate as an OPAL school, which stands for Outdoor Play and Learning. Not only that, but they even have their own forest classroom, from which they conduct classes on one day per week. In March of this year, the school collected 20 mixed plants from our Community Manager, Kevin Merritt. The plants will be installed in various locations around the school, and will be planted by the school's very own gardening club. The club aims to teach the children valuable horticultural skills at an early age, and encourages the children to appreciate their local ecosystems, and the spend more time outdoors.

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