



Monji Plant Profile

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Firethorn *Pyracantha*

03-76



<u>Hardiness</u>	<u>Exposure</u>	<u>Soil</u>	<u>Water</u>	<u>Flowers</u>	<u>Height</u>
Zones 5-9	Full sun preferred, but will grow in partial shade	Moist well drained	Moderate watering	Creamy white, 5 petal, fruit small pome, bright orange-red	Will grow 2-10 feet tall

Pyracantha has many uses in the garden, but it is probably most commonly grown as an evergreen, wall shrub. This is hardly surprising because it is one of the most effective methods of displaying the berries to full effect. In the autumn and early winter, the glowing, brightly colored berries greatly enhance walls – especially when an orange-berried variety is grown against red sandstone that is prevalent in many parts of Cumbria. Perhaps *Pyracantha* is best confined to vertical growth against a wall in order to keep its thorny armor at a safe distance. However, it is quite often left to grow as a free-standing shrub in spacious gardens or large scale, road side plantings where it can reach a height of about three meters. Although they are most well known for the vibrancy of their berries, their flowers are also extremely attractive in late spring. Almost all varieties have white or cream colored flowers, and if the plants are situated in a sunny aspect, a haze of numerous flowers is guaranteed.

Pyracantha is a member of the rose family and like many climbing roses, if grown against a wall, it prefers a warm, south facing position. When planting a young specimen, it will become established quite quickly providing it is given free drainage and an open soil. If the soil is heavy, it is a good idea to incorporate grit and organic matter, for example, leaf mould or well-rotted material from the compost heap. The young roots do have an abhorrence of wet, compact soils and struggle to survive, especially throughout the winter months when the soil is also cold. Like many newly planted specimens, they are adversely effected by the combination of continuous damp and cold.