



Gorse



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Latin: *Ulex europaeus*
Irish: *Aiteann gallda*

The gorse plant it also commonly known as 'furze'.

The flowering season is from March to November.

Habitat: This common evergreen shrub is found on heaths, abandoned pastures, in hedgerows and along walls. It thrives in dry, acidic soils.

Flowers: Golden-yellow, pea-like flowers grow on the gorse bush. They are most dense in spring, though gorse usually bears some flowers all year round. The distinctive, coconut perfume of the gorse fills the air in spring.

Leaves: Narrow, oval-shaped leaves appear on the young gorse shrub. When the shrub is fully grown, these leaves change into sharp spines. These blue-green spikes allow the shrub to survive the harsh winter conditions, particularly in upland regions.

Seeds: The small, dark, rounded seeds of the gorse bush are located within the flower pods. These explode on hot summer days when they are ripe. The seeds can be spread up to 30ft in all directions. They can sometimes remain in the soil for up to 40 years before they start to grow.

Other: Gorse was once a very important plant for farming and rural communities. It provided wood fuel for cooking, food and bedding for animals, and material for hedging and thatching.