CORNISH HEDGES IN GARDENS

Cornish garden hedges / beneficial hedge wildlife / Cornish hedges in garden landscape and design / plants for the Cornish hedge in a garden / shrubs and trees for the garden hedge top / roses for Cornish gardens / Cornish hedges and the kitchen garden / how to trim and maintain a Cornish hedge in a garden / hedge laying, layering and coppicing

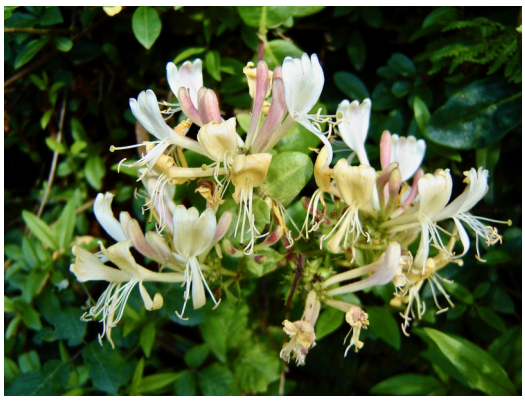
To have a Cornish hedge around your garden is a pleasure and a privilege. Often the hedge is older than the house, a remnant of the countryside before the village or town expanded. It may be a relic of the Stone Age in your own keeping; but whatever its age it is a part of a unique heritage. It is worth trying to establish the origins of your hedge by consulting old maps and deeds.

A Cornish hedge gives important shelter in our windswept peninsula, and provides summer shade. As well as being a visual screen between houses and roads, it makes a good sound barrier, reduces traffic fumes and dust and provides first-rate protection against floods. It absorbs and conserves a lot of moisture, a key advantage with the increasing extremes of rainfall and drought associated with climate change. It harbours insects, birds and animals beneficial to the garden, and the all-year-round wild flowers can be enjoyed by neighbours and visitors passing by as well as by the gardener. Properly looked after, it keeps in the well-trained child or dog, or the supervised tame rabbit or guinea pig. A really healthy thick-growing hedge can even keep out unwelcome cats.

This garden hedge planted with herbs makes a charming, picturesque and suitable frontage with low maintenance. Don't use herbs that spread too quickly by runner roots, or one will take over at the expense of the others and be very difficult to remove without damaging the hedge structure.

It is good to see that many new houses have their gardens enclosed by newly-built Cornish hedges, which will in time acquire their own natural covering of wild flowers, ferns and mosses. It is unfortunate that the standard of building is sometimes unsatisfactory, allowing the hedge to bulge and fall down. Cornish hedges, especially these substandard ones or old ones subjected to heavy vibration from traffic, need watching to knock the stones back into place before they fall out or the bulges form. It is worth taking the trouble to keep the hedge from deteriorating. If one stone falls out, more will soon go.

Cottage gardens are wonderfully enhanced by their stout Cornish hedges built of the local stone, and historically gardens surrounding some of the big houses in Cornwall have been world-famous. Most of these were laid out during the nineteenth century, but there are some of much older vintage, for example Godolphin dating from the 1400s. Many of their hedges can be seen today. Some of the older ones were massively constructed with walks along the top where guests could walk dry-shod with a good view of the garden and the country around.



The native honeysuckle Lonicera periclymenum is a beautiful plant for the Cornish hedge in a garden and very attractive to bumblebees.

Otherwise Cornish hedges do not like people clambering over them, and where this is a problem it may be discouraged by planting native thorns 18 inches apart in two staggered rows 9 inches distant, and running one or two strands of wire along the hedge between the rows. After a few years the combination of wire and thorn becomes impenetrable, although allowing trimming. A hedge like this is an excellent defence against unlawful entry.

The sheltering effect of a good Cornish hedge around an exposed garden is, in effect, to give it a climate of about 200 miles further south, so some tender plants can be grown. The hedge is home for the birds and insects which help to control garden pests, and also provides the joy of watching wildlife close at hand. Cornish hedges are very rich, with more than 500 native plant species able to live in a widely diverse range of hedge habitats. From a garden point of view, a Cornish hedge can be the prettiest of wild flower features, while the drier stone hedge encrusted with its native species makes an exquisite rock garden of mosses and lichens, with small ferns and flowering plants such as stonecrop, tormentil, barren strawberry, scabious and hawkbit growing in the stony earth topping.

BENEFICIAL HEDGE WILDLIFE

Gardeners are usually nature lovers at heart, and most realise that oak, hawthorn, blackthorn and bramble are rich hedgerow hosts for wildlife species. Pretty native hedge-top species such as dog rose and honeysuckle add charm to the garden, as well as food for wildlife. A Cornish hedge with a good mixture of species including holly and ivy growing on top forms an attractive background to the garden scene all the year round. Ivy may have to be discouraged from spreading over the stonework, but forms here and there handsome evergreen flowering and fruiting bushes on top of Cornish hedges, giving food and shelter to many beneficial insects and birds. The thicker and higher the hedge, the more food and safety it provides for hedge-nesting birds.

Flowering ivy bushes among the hawthorn and other native trees on top of a garden hedge are the best provision for 'gardener's friend' insects and birds.

Most people love garden birds, and no one wishes to break the law which protects them. In February, sometimes

earlier, the birds are setting up their territories and spying out the best places to nest, and by March they are building. Then they lay their eggs and soon are feeding their chicks. Some of them then have a second and a third brood so the last time they are using their nest and feeding fledglings is in July and August. After that the young birds need the fruits, seeds and insect larvae in the hedge to feed them through the winter.

It is an offence, under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (Part 1.1), intentionally to take, damage or destroy any wild bird or its nest while being built or in use, or to take or destroy its eggs or chicks. Incidental destruction of any of these, if it could reasonably have been avoided, is also an offence, (Part 1.4). This means that gardeners should not trim or cut down their Cornish hedges during the spring and summer in case a bird is nesting there. It would be hard to prove that the damage could not reasonably have been avoided by trimming at other times of year, outside the breeding season. Shrubs that make good hedges like hawthorn, blackthorn, ivy, privet, lonicera, or escallonia are choice nesting places for blackbirds, thrushes, chaffinches and other small birds. Any interference that causes the parents to desert the nest, or that leaves it open to predators, is the same in effect as physical destruction and must be avoided.

A healthy population of insects is essential in a garden. Birds and beetles are in the front line as gardener's friends, making war on the small number of pest species such as greenfly, aphids, leather-jackets and garden snails, while the flying insects are necessary for pollination. The gentle hum of hoverflies and bumblebees and the bright wings of butterflies and moths visiting the flowers are a vital part of the pleasure of the summer garden. The best possible way to nurture all these is to have a Cornish hedge in and around your plot. The stone facing, the herbaceous plants on the sides and the bushes on the top in total can provide safe homes and food for hundreds of friendly insect species even in a small garden.

Beautiful, harmless sun-loving hoverflies such as this Helophilus pendulus will be attracted by a Cornish hedge around a garden, enlivening the flowerbeds in summer.

CORNISH HEDGES IN GARDEN LANDSCAPE AND DESIGN

Cornish hedging lends itself aptly to garden landscaping, the inwardly-curved batter giving stability to retaining walls and island beds alike. The hedges can be used to create or contain different levels, with integral steps of the same stone, or to divide the garden area with straight or curved hedge lines. A Cornish hedge makes a good internal screen for different compartments of the garden, far better than using fencing or trellis as these soon rot or blow down, given our wet and windy climate. A hedge is sometimes objected to, as it seems to take up a lot of ground, but because a Cornish hedge is as high as it is wide it more than doubles the available ground space when you allow flowers to grow on the sides as well as planting along the top. Shrubs or trees on the top do not rob or shade the soil as much as they would if grown at ground level, so you can cultivate or mow almost up to the foot of the hedge if you wish.

Important practical aspects are the hedge's value as a sound barrier, a shelter and a screen; it should be high enough, and so placed and top-planted, as to give effective service in

Low Cornish hedges make dividers and turn this small back yard, 15 feet square, into a garden. The roses are 'Alberic Barbier' and 'Danse du feu', the latter one of the few modern climbers that can do well in Cornwall, if sheltered.

these respects. By suitably arranging the subdivision of the garden into compartments, barriers can be raised against the main source of noise, creating a quiet sitting-out place. Designers of housing estates should always include Cornish hedges as strategic baffles and screens. Visually, the over-all view of the garden should be harmonious in itself and with the surrounding landscape of town or country. The close view within each compartment, if the garden is divided, can be considered separately, with perhaps variations within the theme and a focal point to give interest.

The local stone should be used, sourcing it as near as possible to the garden's location or at least matching it with the local geological structure. This will usually ensure that it goes with the stone of which the house may be built. Nothing looks worse than a garden built of shale around a granite house. Garden features such as waterfalls or standing stones should also be of the same stone. The character of the stone will largely dictate the style in which your design is carried out, but with all types of stone simplicity should be the key, letting the stone speak for itself.

Even in a tiny garden, a scaled-down Cornish hedge dividing steps or path from a flower-bed or edging a small lawn makes a charming feature for rock plants. Raised island beds can be of any shape from circular or kidney-shaped to variations on a square, while a partial divider can be built as a length of hedge with traditional rounded ends or shaped at the gardener's whim, perhaps curving, serpentine or banjo-shaped, swelling out at the ends of the hedge into circular turrets.

By varying the fill used in building the hedge, specialised growing conditions can be created. Using the ordinary rab fill (clay-shale subsoil) to two-thirds the height of the hedge, the top part can be filled with a mixture to suit the gardener's purpose, for example the standard recipe for a moraine garden, five parts of fine chippings to one part of the desired type of soil; while the addition of limestone chippings would allow the cultivation of plants that are not happy in Cornwall's usually basic or acidic soils. This use of adapted Cornish hedges as raised beds allows a plants enthusiast to grow an unusual variety of species, creates extra pockets for planting in a small garden, and is a boon for the ageing or less able gardener as it reduces bending. It is important that these hedges should be well built, with the proper inwardly-curved batter, well-rammed subsoil fill and skilfully interlocked stones, as otherwise collapse is likely to begin just as the plants are maturing, a source of disappointment and annoyance to the gardener.

It is best not to plant shrubs with their backs right up against the hedge as this heavily shades the stone sides, leading in time to collapse; keep them at least a metre away. To remain sound for centuries, the hedge structure needs to be open to light and air so the healthy roots of herbaceous plants grow between the stones. For the same reason the sides of Cornish hedges should be kept free of woody species. These should only be allowed to grow on top.

PLANTS FOR THE CORNISH HEDGE IN A GARDEN

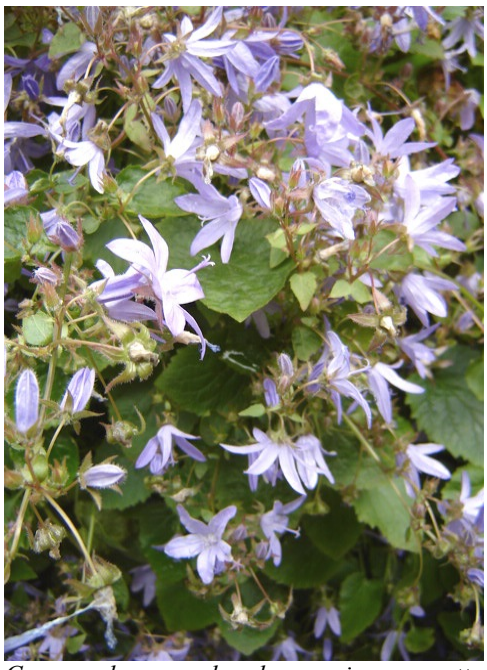
When cherished as it should be, a Cornish hedge naturally produces its own wild flowers

and greenery, according to whatever seed was in the soil with which it was topped off when built. The most relaxed way of looking after it is to allow nature to do as it will, with a little bit of winter work to keep it from invading the rest of the garden. This means some trimming and, if you are lucky enough to have trees on the hedge, some selective coppicing to keep them, in a traditional way, from getting too large and over-shading the garden.

On the other hand, if the wish is to grow plants which are not native, then care must be taken to do this in such a way that the hedge structure does not deteriorate. Our hedges do not like being dug up on the sides or top, or too close to the foot. Many garden plants are unsuitable for the sides of Cornish hedges, and a careful choice has to be made. If you are looking for minimal maintenance a good one is the dainty pink-and-white daisy Mexican fleabane (*Erigeron karvinskianus)*, locally known as 'Cousin Jack' because the old Cornish tin-miners brought it back as a souvenir from Central America, This naturalises itself on a drier, sunny hedge and has a very long flowering period. Another plant which thrives un-helped on the hedge-side is *Campanula porscharskyana*, which with its soft lilac-blue wide-open star-shaped bells looks very pretty when co-existing with Cousin Jack's pink-and-white daisies. It is more vigorous than *C. portenschlagiana*, which has darker purple bells. Between them they make a neat, weed-suppressing cover for the hedge, and their roots bind the stones well.

'Cousin Jack', the Mexican fleabane brought home by Cornish miners and now naturalised in many dry hedges in town and village. This young plant will soon produce a mass of little pink and white daisies over a long flowering period.

There are some plants that are very unwelcome in hedges; for instance the periwinkles and the deadnettles, especially the variegated yellow archangel (*Lamiastrum galeobdolon* ssp *argentatum*), reputed to have been introduced by Treseder, the well-known Truro nurseryman, about sixty years ago, and which was first recorded growing wild in Cornwall in 1972. These overly-strong creeping plants should be avoided like the plague that they are. Already there are over 500 records of this deadnettle in the wild in three-quarters of the 10km-squares of Cornwall. It spreads, as all the rampant introduced weeds do, by overcoming the natural plant life, as well as being carried around and dumped by gardeners. All the creeping deadnettles are too rampant to allow them into a Cornish hedge, where they are very difficult to control. Some garden plants, for instance winter heliotrope (*Petasites fragrans*), montbretia and the white-belled three-cornered leek (*Allium triquetrum*), have spread disastrously along miles of roadside, having been thoughtlessly thrown out of gardens into the hedge. Unlike these rampant weeds, Cousin Jack does not spread aggressively by itself because it is not strong enough to overcome the normal Cornish flora. That is why it is often seen growing out of stone walls where there is little competition. In the ordinary Cornish hedge or turf



Campanula porscharskyana is a pretty companion to Cousin Jack for a weed-free town garden hedge.

hedge, it needs a little tending for the reward of its plentiful daisy flowers throughout the summer.

Avoid those rockery plants that spread into a big heavy mat, for example aubretia, polygonum and some erigerons, as these are not good for the hedge structure. The lamiums, some herbs and some of the ornamental grasses, while suitable in appearance, might love your hedge too much, over-running every crevice and becoming a nuisance. For the natural Cornish hedge look the plants should all mingle together, with some ferns and grasses in between, not one being dominant over the others. The intricate mass of all the various roots in every crevice holds the structure securely, and the tangled growth becomes a tapestry of co-existing flowers.

In the old days cottagers used to help the wild flowers in their hedges, collecting seed from the more attractive species to sow among the existing flora, and taking out the rough weeds with a knife. Nowadays all the less common (and many of the once-common) wild flowers are at best struggling for existence, at worst becoming locally extinct, because of the disastrous action of the flail, which degrades the habitat. It is against the law to dig up scheduled plants, or any other wild plant without the landowner's permission, and the plants would often die after transplantation anyway. It is better to use seed, or raise your own little plug plants.

Tufted vetch (Vicia cracca) is one of the desirable wild flowers to have in a garden hedge.

A little wild seed might be collected from common, freely-seeding species such as red campion, bluebell, herb robert and foxglove nearby, if your hedge lacks these. Buying wild flower seed can be a doubtful practice as some will be the wrong strain for the locality. Don't use the packets sold in the garden centre, from commercial garden seed firms. Go to specialist providers of responsibly-sourced British wild-flower meadow seed, whose stock should include the flower species and the kind of grasses that will flourish in your hedge. Don't buy flower meadow mixtures, as these contain far too much grass, usually 80/20 grass to wild flower seed. This is the wrong way round for Cornish hedges which would naturally be more like 80% wild flower species to 20% grasses. Find a source that sells 1 or 2 gram packets of individual species, priced usually at a couple of pounds each. Choose grass species from the fescues, bents, and other native grasses such as sweet vernal, crested dogtail, hair grass and slender foxtail, and as many as you can afford of different wild flower species. Species such as common yellow toadflax (*Linaria vulgaris*), tufted vetch (*Vicia cracca*), betony (*Stachys officinalis)*, self-heal (*Prunella vulgaris)*, yarrow *(Achillea millefolium),* sheep'-bit scabious (*Jasione montana*) and field scabious (*Knautia arvensis*) are sold by specialist firms, and make a lovely addition to your garden. To know more species that are suitable to buy, go for any that appears in the Cornish Hedges Library's Checklist of Cornish Hedge Flora, to suit your type of hedge.

Don't scatter your precious seed along the hedge face and hope it will grow. Make little pockets of earth in the crevices between stones, plugging below with a bit of turf to prevent your softened earth and seed from washing straight down from the hedge next time it rains. In each suitable crevice sow a tiny pinch, no more than three or four seeds. Either sow into the hedge in this way, preferably in autumn in imitation of nature's own way, or raise the seeds as plug plants and bed them into the hedge crevices in spring. Make sure they don't dry out before they are established.

An interesting and legitimate project might be to imitate the natural flora using suitable garden flowers. Native annuals, biennials and the less aggressive perennials all thrive without attention in Cornish hedges, so choose your plants to echo the wild species: the dainty old-fashioned annuals such as linaria (echoing wild toadflax), cornflower, nigella, convolvulus (echoing hedge bindweed), mignonette, nemophila, limnanthes, and pink purslane. Half-hardy annuals tend to be more attractive to slugs, but a few might be worth trying, for instance night-scented stock, morning glory, antirrhinum and lobelia. Avoid brilliantly-coloured and exotic-looking flowers such as African marigold, gazania, calceolaria and mesembryanthemum. Cheerful annuals such as Californian poppy suit seaside village hedges, but generally speaking avoid 'patio' plants guaranteed to give 'a mass of colour'. They can be unsympathetic to the semi-natural look of a Cornish hedge.

The brown-lipped snail (Cepea nemoralis) comes in a jewel-like variety of colours and stripes, rose-pink, amber, chestnut and yellow. It will live in the garden hedge and not attack your lettuces. Allow a few cow parsley and hogweeds to grow in the hedge for this beautiful snail, which is the favourite food of the song thrush.

Don't put slug-bait in your hedge for the sake of trying to grow any plant they like too much. Only a very few kinds of slug and snail attack choice plants. There are many other harmless and interesting little molluscs that live in hedges and are essential to the balance of nature, and you don't want to kill these along with the others or poison the hedgehogs and song-thrushes at second hand, for the sake of any flower that isn't able to naturalise there. Oddly enough, some tasty plants such as violas are much less likely to be attacked when growing in a jungle of grass and other hedge plants than when carefully tended in the bare soil of a flowerbed. They will grow more straggly and with smaller flowers, but this makes them look more natural and charming in your hedge.

Honesty is one of the old-fashioned biennials that is suitable for naturalising in a garden-flower version of a Cornish hedge community.

Suitable biennials are forget-me-not, honesty, foxglove, musk mallow, verbascum, and various campanulas. Don't use the cultivated foxglove if you can avoid it, as it crosses with the wild strain and corrupts it, as do Spanish squills with the English bluebell. Buying foxgloves as 'wild flower' seed is risky as it may be this hybrid with sparse bells pointing outward all round the stem instead of the genuine, graceful wild foxglove, and it will get into the local wild foxgloves and spoil them. Collect a little local seed from these instead.

Any ordinary perennial that is not too vigorous or too showy will suit your garden version of a natural Cornish hedge. Choose those of more modest appearance and particularly those which echo the wild perennials, such as achillea (yarrow), centaurea (knapweed), stachys (betony), astrantia, galega (goat's rue), polemonium (Jacob's ladder), linaria (toadflax), aquilegia (columbine) catananche, linum (flax), primrose, lychnis (campion), thalictrum

(meadow rue), filipendula (meadow-sweet), veronica (speedwell), cowslip and violets. Don't forget to encourage ferns, perhaps adding some of the decorative forms of our native ferns which love growing in Cornish hedges.

Hardy geraniums are good, preferably the non-creeping varieties such as *Geranium phaeum* and *G. pratense.* Plant them on the side or top of the hedge where they will benefit from the good drainage, otherwise the crowns may die in a wet winter. Beware of the more vigorously rooting ones such as *G. procurrens* and *G. macrorrhizum* which run rampant. The same warning applies to vigorous perennials such as Michaelmas daisy and the large golden rod which spread rapidly by underground runner roots. The heavy top growth of these will also smother out other plants, reducing the floral diversity of your hedge and flopping out too far into the garden. The smaller hybrid golden rods are all right, and wild golden rod is ideal.

For a dry hedge, saxifrages, cinquefoils, ornamental strawberries, armerias (thrift), hawkweeds, globe thistles, sedums, stonecrops and sempervivums may be added to the natural scree community of mosses and lichens. There are plenty of non-invasive rock plants that would be suitable for a hedge of this type. With a stone hedge having little or no soil you may need to make small pockets of earth to start the plants off. If you add shell sand or lime you can grow plants that dislike an acid soil, such as thyme, corydalis, wallflower and maiden pink.

Part of a charming little cottage hedge where garden plants mingle as they should naturally do: they include meadow rue, pink-flowered strawberry, columbine, hardy geranium, linaria 'Canon Went', Madeiran cranesbill, ivy-leaved toadflax and native ferns, with fuchsia, wild honeysuckle, field rose (Rosa arvensis) and hawthorn on top of the hedge.

When planting on any Cornish hedge, insinuate the roots carefully without loosening the soil between the stones. If scattering seed on to the hedge is unsuccessful, grow the plants as small plugs that will cause the minimum of disturbance in planting. They may need watering for a while; with a rose on the watering can or a fine mist from the hose, water gently above where you have planted and avoid washing soil down out of the crevices.

With all the plants you choose, avoid modern hybrid forms. Find a supplier who specialises in the old strains granny used to grow. These will do best and look most suitable, and are the ones capable of naturalising and continuing to appear year after year in your hedge unaided. Lastly, among these suitable old-fashioned plants on your hedge, tuck in some of the pretty creeping weeds you pull out of your flowerbeds - the speedwells especially. These make an under-story layer and help to keep the hedge moist in summer, and germander speedwell is one of the more beautiful of hedge flowers. If you have a

The wild germander speedwell (Veronica chamaedrys) should be in every garden hedge.

waste corner in the garden where these small weeds grow, the best way to transfer them to the hedge is to dig out plugs the size of a golf-ball and push them into suitable crevices between the stones.

Once your plants have begun to grow in the spring don't touch them, don't do any more weeding or trimming, or the airy structure they make by growing mingled together will collapse and look messy. The undisturbed mingling of the flowers on a Cornish hedge gives each plant support, light and air. Meshed lightly together like this they can withstand winds, while the earlier, low-growing spring flowers such as primroses and violets are kept damp but are not smothered. So do all your weeding by the end of March, and don't remove any stragglers after May Day at the very latest. When weeding your hedge don't pull the plants out, as this will loosen the stones. Use a knife to cut through just below the green top, leaving the severed roots to rot away in the soil. An old-fashioned dinner knife with the tip of the blade snapped off and sharpened like a chisel is the best tool to use.

Always allow the hedge plants to complete their annual cycle. Do not remove dead heads or trim the plants off in autumn. Let the whole lot seed and die down naturally over the winter, making its own frost protection, then in early spring (February and March) just tidy up by hand if needful, picking off dead plant remains (check there is no wildlife wintering inside the stems), cutting out big weeds and brambles and pulling off any nettle-tops and seedling cleavers. In time these weeds will diminish and disappear, while some of your introduced flowers will naturalise and produce a charming, permanent, trouble-free effect.

SHRUBS AND TREES FOR THE GARDEN HEDGE TOP

For the tops of Cornish hedges around gardens the old-fashioned *Fuchsia riccartonii, Tamarix anglica* and *Escallonia* varieties were often planted in the milder, sea-blown parts of Cornwall, giving the village landscape a special distinction. This tradition needs reviving, especially where there is a visitor income. These hedges are always mentioned nostalgically by visitors who knew Cornwall before the second world war; famously Ireland has kept them, while Cornwall has allowed so many of them to be grubbed out. *Fuchsia* and *escallonia* are much beloved by bumblebees (but *escallonia* may be less loved by hay fever sufferers). Like privet, fuchsias grow very easily and quickly from cuttings. *Fuchsia magellanica* may also be used. The tamarisk hedging on the Lizard was said by Lake in 1847 reputedly to have been 'originally brought thither from St. Michael's Mount by a carter, who having lost his whip, gathered a rod at that place, and when arrived at the end of his journey stuck it into the ground, where it took root and became the parent stock of the locality.' Since then it has grown happily in the windiest places on the Lizard.

Fuchsia riccartonii hedges humming with bumblebees were an integral part of Cornish summer holidays before so many of these traditional hedgetop shrubs were destroyed in favour of concrete blocks or African marigolds. Luckily a fashion for cottage garden scenery has now returned, so it is time for fuchsia hedges to be replanted.

Some of the larger houses of villa type had the tops of their Cornish hedges planted with an evergreen shrub such as New Zealand holly or Portugal laurel. These hedges may still be seen on village

outskirts, neatly-trimmed, high and massive. A cottage equivalent was to use the fast-growing and easily-shaped *Lonicera nitida*, often chosen by blackbirds for their nest. These hedges require regular trimming and their appearance is suburban so not suitable outside the village unless allowed to grow into their natural outline, and pruned down occasionally if they become too leggy.

When allowed to grow naturally and to flower, the common privet (Ligustrum ovalifolium) is a handsome shrub and is excellent for wildlife including the superb privet hawk-moth.

Shrubs have a less aggressive root system than most trees, so do not need a massive Cornish hedge to support them. Seriously suckering shrubs such as sumach are best avoided. Deciduous shrubs such as spiraea, deutzia, mock orange, snowberry and forsythia will tolerate growing on a hedge. *Buddleia davidii* will grow anywhere but has a tendency to become leggy and may wind-rock on a hedge, so should be cut down to 20 inches (0.5m) every winter to keep it in check, after which it flowers on the current year's wood. Privet (*Ligustrum ovalifolium*) has a smal root system comparative to its size but is a strong grower and may need selective coppicing, otherwise the pull of its top-heavy shape may loosen the hedge structure. On a very exposed site privet is one of the few shrubs that will grow at all, and as the salt wind perpetually nips the growth it makes a bushy and almost maintenance-free hedge. When allowed to grow naturally and to flower, privet is a good-looking shrub and is excellent for many kinds of wildlife. Butterflies and bumblebees find it more attractive even than buddleia. The native privet, *Ligustrum vulgare*, is the best for growing on the hedge top if you can get it.

Generally, native shrubs are the best choice, especially where the garden hedge is very much a part of the local rural landscape. Hawthorn, blackthorn (despite suckering) and gorse are Cornish hedge staples and, if trimmed along the sides in winter to keep them dense and twiggy where they join the hedgetop at the roots, will even keep out cats. So as not to shade the garden too much, a bushy hedgerow on top of a Cornish hedge (unless the garden is large) should not be much higher (measuring from the hedgetop) than 4 - 6ft (1.2 - 1.8m). To be animal-proof, 2 - 3ft (0.8 - 1m) may be better as this keeps the bushes thick at the bottom.

Gorse makes a formidable barrier against intruders, both four-legged and two. It is easily maintained and is a glorious sight and scent in full bloom, beloved by bees.

There are two kinds of gorse, the European (*Ulex europaeus*) and the Western (*Ulex gallii*). The first has its main bloom in spring and the second in late summer, with a few flowers through most of the winter, so a mixture of the two kinds gives bloom more or less all the year round (hence the saying, "When the gorse is out of blossom, then kissing is out of fashion"). The cultivated varieties of broom are spectacular in bloom but are not long-lived and every few years leave a temporary gap in the hedge-top. The evergreen shrub *Berberis julianae* has vicious thorns against trespassers, and has attractive foliage and

little yellow flowers invaluable to early bees, but needs some shelter; it grows from cuttings. *Berberis darwinii* is quite traditional on garden hedges, often mixed with flowering currant.

The Cornish hedge allows trees to be a part of the garden scene without taking up too much space or robbing the soil too badly, but they do need to be managed when growing on a hedge, and this may be beyond the scope of the average gardener. For the smaller garden, small trees are a wise choice. Most are very good for wildlife and attractive in their blossom, catkins or berries, for instance elder, hazel and hawthorn. Field maple, spindle and mountain ash are not suited to some parts of Cornwall. Planting holly with hawthorn suits well in forming garden hedges, being attractive, good for wildlife and a good barrier against intruders. Crab apple may succeed if not too open to salt winds.

Our climate encourages swift growth so that a large tree, on a sheltered garden hedge, can soon become a menace if it cannot be coppiced. Conifers are too top-heavy to plant on Cornish hedges, and the notorious *Cupressus leylandii,* which grows very fast and reaches over a hundred feet high should never be planted on or by a Cornish hedge, or in a small garden at all. Most conifers fail to regrow if coppiced, and topping them creates an ugly shape. They are alien to Cornwall and in winter keep the garden damper than necessary.

If your hedge is substantial enough to plant trees on top, sessile oak and hawthorn are among the best. The most satisfying way is to gather acorns and haws from nearby native trees, sprout them in a box of sand out of doors over winter (protect from mice), then pot up the seedlings in the spring and plant out the young saplings over the following winter. They will need watering in dry weather for a couple of years until they get their roots well down into the centre of the hedge. Be sure to keep their heads free of surrounding growth, especially in July. Broad-leaved trees like sycamore, ash, and oak should be chosen, because these take kindly to being selectively coppiced. For evergreens, go for holly and holm oak.

Native hawthorn (Crataegus monogyna) is the most useful small tree for the top of a garden hedge, making a good barrier and shelter, attractive in blossom and fruit, and very good for garden wildlife.

Coppiced trees on hedge-tops are a good place to put nest-boxes for blue-tits and other birds. Allowing a good lacing of roses, brambles or prickly shrubs on top of the hedge around the tree makes it difficult for cats and interfering people. Avoid a long clear fly-way in for the birds as this makes them vulnerable to the sparrowhawk. So does a bird-table, unless you site it in the bushes where you can't see it and the hawk can't so easily swoop and snatch. With a proper Cornish hedge around the garden, full of seeds, berries and invertebrate life, birds need little feeding except when the weather freezes.

ROSES FOR CORNISH GARDENS

It is often said that "You can't grow roses in Cornwall," but this is because people are trying to grow the wrong kind, usually hybrid tea roses and modern climbers. There are many less-known old-fashioned roses that will cope with or even enjoy the Cornish climate and soil, and thrive on neglect. These are especially among the *wichuraiana* hybrids, which like to have

The rambler rose 'Crimson Shower' continues blooming long past the main rose season. It has been encouraged to root itself along this roadside garden hedge with charming effect, especially as the natural turf, mosses and ferns are allowed to grow between.

rain after the first flush of bloom as this encourages further growth and more blooming in the same year. S*empervirens* hybrids and some species roses, especially musk roses such as *Rosa brunonii* will also ramble over a Cornish hedge to beautiful effect, sometimes remaining in the hedge long after the cottage has been demolished.

Roses make an excellent thorny barrier on top of a hedge, as long as they are the ramblers and scramblers, not the climbing roses which tend to make a long leg and then have all their blooms pointing up to the sky. Climbers are usually modern hybrids which do not do well in Cornwall, especially in the more exposed gardens and with acidic soil. Modern roses are prone to disease and die-back, needing an unacceptable regime of spraying and fertilising for a relatively short life.

If the hedge is very dry the roses may have to be planted at the foot of the hedge and then trained along the top. The small-flowered *wichuraiana* ramblers of the Dorothy Perkins and Excelsa type can be encouraged to root themselves along the top of the hedge, to good effect. Lady Gay and Crimson Shower are look-alikes for these two popular roses and much less prone to disease, while Crimson Shower blooms perpetually into the bargain. Care has to be taken not to let the roses grow out into the street, otherwise you can get unpopular. Rather than being cut off, each long shoot can be woven back into the main bush, to flower later. The trouble-free roses recommended here dislike pruning and do not need spraying or fertilising. If they do have an attack of disease they outgrow it by themselves. Only really dying wood needs to be removed.

'Alberic Barbier', the rose 'par excellence' for Cornish gardens, thriving in the moist climate.

'Dortmund' will scramble all over a Cornish hedge, making an impassable thorny barrier against unlawful entry by people or cats, and producing its clusters of cheery scarlet single blooms continually until Christmas.

Chief among these very reliable and lovely roses is Alberic Barbier which has double creamy-white scented flowers from April to December. It is to be seen in many older cottage gardens and strikes readily from cuttings. Paul Transon and René André, by the same breeder as Alberic Barbier, are very beautiful shades of pink. Aviateur Bleriot is another early rose, opening yellow and fading to creamy

'Ghislaine de Feligonde' is a good-tempered, fragrant rose that will grace a Cornish hedge and looks like peaches-and-cream.

white, which is very fragrant. The bluish-purple Veilchenblau also does well on a sunny hedge, and so does the larger-flowered Madame Alfred Carrière, opening blush-pink to white. Alexander Girault, another super-healthy Barbier rose, is a rich magenta-cerise with golden centre and pale reverse to the petals and is vigorous enough to grow through trees on a hedge.

In the red and yellow colour ranges Dortmund and Leverkusen do unusually well for relatively modern roses and will scramble along the hedge to make a good thorny barrier. Like Alberic Barbier, Dortmund will bloom until Christmas in most years, without dead-heading, and the cheerful scarlet single flowers are highly resistant to rain. Other old favourites in Cornwall include Albertine, Félicité Perpétue and American Pillar. The latter, a first cross with the prairie rose *Rosa setigera*, was doubtless brought home from America by Cornish miners, hence its ubiquitous popularity around the mining areas of Cornwall and its place in the county's history.

Beware of the well-known *Rosa filipes* Kiftsgate and the popular Rambling Rector; Kiftsgate especially is so vigorous it can destroy the hedge. *Rosa helenae* is a better choice of species, with mounds of huge mid-summer clusters of ivory-petalled flowers shaped like buttercups, very attractive to bees and having masses of small red hips in autumn, and quite vigorous enough to train along a hedge or up into a hedge-top tree. Another strong grower which will reach a long way along the hedge and made a good thorny barrier is Kew Rambler, which smothers itself in clusters of single pink-and-white flowers similar to apple blossom.

Adelaide d'Orleans is a lovely member of the *sempervirens* group, almost evergreen with coppery young foliage in spring followed by pink buds and pale blush blooms like large ornamental cherry blossom hanging gracefully from slender stems that lace themselves through the bushes. Other beautiful roses for rambling over Cornish hedges are Flora (*sempervirens*), Francois Juranville, Gardenia and Auguste Gervais (*wichuraiana* x tea roses), while some of the small-flowered *wichuraiana* ramblers such as Lady Godiva, Sanders' White and Débutante prolong the season by blooming slightly later in July.

Ghislaine de Féligonde is suitable for the smaller garden hedge; her name is a bit of a mouthful but she is well worth the effort, a charming mixture of shades as the orange buds open to reveal massed clusters of blooms of mingled pink, peach and gold, fading to magnolia and cream. The moss rose William Lobb, named for a Cornishman, is the best Cornish rose of all, growing, rooting and renewing himself for ever and having the most beautiful blooms of mingled purple colours with a rich scent like fresh spiced farmhouse cake. The most beautiful pale pink rose is Awakening, with a wonderful scent and blooming well into the winter - better than the popular New Dawn, also a sport of Dr Van Fleet. Along with this at the top of the recommended list has to be Lilac Domino, an unknown rose

Lilac Domino thrives in a Cornish hedge and is beloved by bees.

discovered neglected in a Cornish garden and rescued and named by the author's mother. It has unusual picotée edges of crimson, purple and lilac to the lemon-white petals, in big clusters of golden-centred flowers with a delicious scent of freshly-cut peaches. It is surprisingly rain-resistant for a single rose and it will thrive in a Cornish hedge completely neglected for fifty years and more - as the plant grown from the original rescued cutting has done. All these roses grow well in Cornwall on their own roots, often better than grafted plants as these tend to get disease entering the grafting scar. Most of the roses pictured here, including the magnificent Dortmund, were grown from cuttings.

Don't let the roses - or anything else - make a thick curtain over the stone face of the hedge. Train them along the top. The sides of a Cornish hedge need plenty of light so the herbaceous growth between the stones is always thick and healthy, its roots holding the stones firmly in place and preventing soil loss, especially in extreme weather.

CORNISH HEDGES AND THE KITCHEN GARDEN

There is a big move back to growing our own fruit and vegetables, and the best plot for the purpose is one surrounded by a good five-foot Cornish or turf hedge. Cottages in the old days used to have just such a plot nearby, often not attached to the house, sometimes oddly-shaped to fit a corner between fields and road and perhaps no more than twenty or thirty feet across, but securely hedged around. A small wicket gate, preferably on the south side, gave access. Many of these old Cornish kitchen gardens must have disappeared under 'improvements' such as road-widening and field enlargement, but a good number still survive, though often unrecognised, neglected and overgrown.

It would make sense to bring them back into cultivation now. Indeed, a drive to enclose many more such handy little areas as kitchen gardens, perhaps as a voluntary movement, could add up to a huge reduction in food miles and, with volunteer labour, cheaply produce fresh organic produce for local consumption, including the excellent varieties of fruits and vegetables that are no longer grown for the commercial market.

A traditional small hedged kitchen garden belonging to a nearby cottage. Sadly, like this one many of these have fallen into disuse, their rich soil and sheltering Cornish hedges now full of nettles and ivy - or, worse, bulldozed to make a parking space for cars. Gardens and little hedged fields like this could go a long way towards eliminating food miles, cheaply producing fresh organic produce.

A Cornish hedge protects the garden against wind, frost and flood, and keeps the ground inside warmer than outside, so crops can be started earlier in the year and many will stand in the ground all winter. The shelter of a good Cornish hedge is also greatly appreciated by the gardener, for instance when working in a cold March wind. The hedge keeps out animals which might otherwise cause havoc in the seedbeds and among the crops. Make sure there are no holes where rabbits can enter, and always knock any loose hedge stone in tight before it can fall. If a rabbit does start a hole, block it with a stone immediately. With gorse or thorns along the top, the hedge can be equally effective against human marauders. It harbours

necessary wildlife, the birds, shrews, ground beetles, ladybirds and the rest that hoover up grubs, aphids and other pests.

Slugs and snails love the crevices in the hedge but strangely enough are less of a problem with a Cornish hedge around the garden than without it. The hedge itself, when in proper condition, provides them with plenty of food, and also acts as a trap, as blackbirds, thrushes, hedgehogs, foxes and rats are well aware of their presence and work along the face of the hedge night and day, raking them out from between the stones. Their prime target is the ubiquitous garden snail, *Helix asper.* Only three or four of the varieties of slugs and snails that inhabit the hedge are a nuisance to the gardener, the rest do not touch the crops. In a garden surrounded by a Cornish hedge where nature has been allowed to establish and maintain a balance there is seldom much of a problem with pests. Problems begin when use of slug pellets and pesticides has poisoned too many of the natural predators that live in the hedge. Using old-fashioned means of pest control will give these 'gardener's friends' a chance to re-establish themselves.

The most effective method of all is to go out at first light every day and collect all the slugs and snails that are on the soil or plants in the vegetable plot. These will be the common garden snail, the small plain brown strawberry snail, the big black, brown, orange or grey *Arion ater* slug, the black-and-grey striped and the tiny white slug. Put them in a bucket and walk off to not less than fifty yards away, and decant them into a suitable hedge. They will not come back from this distance, and if you perform this faithfully for two or three seasons you will have no more trouble. You have kept the kinds that don't touch your plants and are beneficial to your garden, and the ones you have banished have not been hurt and will continue to be a safe food supply for wildlife.

Around the orchard or fruit-and-vegetable garden, a Cornish hedge is valuable as it provides nesting places and sources of nectar to give a permanent home to bumblebees and other pollinating insects. The Cornish hedge with its earth core and stone cladding makes supreme bumblebee habitat, better than the turf hedge as it provides a greater variety of wild flowers and the opportunity for more species of bee, as some burrow in the soil and others seek the crevices between the stones. The hedge also provides a base for the wrens that ceaselessly pick mites and aphids from the fruit trees.

With bushes and small trees on top of the hedge it is high enough to shelter most apple trees from the frequent salty gales and occasional frosty east winds that are so damaging to buds and blossom, and to break the force of the autumnal equinoctials that in an open unsheltered garden can bring the whole apple crop to the ground prematurely.

The hedge itself can be used to augment the available space. The wild fruits it produces can be harvested, and they give a hint to planting others. Where sloes will grow, so (unless the site is too exposed) will Kea plums and damsons, and where hawthorn will grow so will crab apples. Blackberries and loganberries adore a Cornish hedge, and strawberries, wild or tame, grow happily between the stones. The quality of your blackberries can be improved by cutting out and discarding any plants that have deformed fruits and keeping the best. Those growing in garden hedges have quite often hybridised with a garden variety at some time and produce plants with superior berries. These have a better flavour and the plants are less of a problem than the giant garden varieties. Autumn-fruiting raspberries are more likely to escape bird damage if blackberries are fruiting nearby.

Gooseberries and blackcurrants grown on the hedge are easy to pick. Fruits such as these that may not like the wet Cornish winter soil do better growing on a hedge, as it is well-drained. In one garden in West Penwith the best-fruiting blackcurrant bush every year was the one that originated when a bush below rooted one of its branch-tips into the turf on top of the hedge and grew a new bush there. Forty years on it still thrives, while the original bush and its fellows down in the garden have long gone, victims of the Cornish curse of die-back.

HOW TO TRIM AND MAINTAIN A CORNISH HEDGE IN A GARDEN

Trimming and maintenance work should be done only in winter, otherwise it disturbs nesting insects and birds, and eliminates the prettier wild flowers. The idea of displaying the stone facing of Cornish hedges by weeding out the green growth has to be firmly resisted as this has a disastrous effect on the hedge structure, wild flowers and birds.

The stability of a Cornish hedge relies on the stone facing and although the stones are put in tightly when the hedge is built, if the soil is removed or eroded from around them they will eventually fall out. You might think that just weeding the face of the hedge does no damage, but removing roots and soil allows the packing soil behind and around the stones to get dry and loosen and then rain washes it out. The trouble is then that, with perhaps half a dozen stones loose, the gardener may not have the hedging skill to put them back securely. Soon more stones come loose, the side of the hedge is collapsing and it is too late for a minor repair. A large gap is no problem for a good hedger, but the decision may be made to get the hedge taken away and "a nice tidy concrete block wall" put up. This tragedy is avoided if the hedge is looked after properly. And why not employ a hedger? You'd call in a builder or a plumber for other skilled repairs that enhance the value of your property.

Don't prune old-fashioned rambling roses such as this wichuraiana hybrid Paul Transon or the sempervirens or species roses. Let them scramble up into the hedge-top trees and bushes, and keep them under control by weaving any long growths back into the hedge.

So never use any digging tool such as trowel or fork to weed a Cornish hedge, and don't pull plants out by the roots from between the stones. Neither should herbicides be used, because the resulting loss of healthy root growth can cause later structural collapse. Never use strimmers, flails, brush-cutters or other rotary trimmers and mowers on Cornish hedges or along wildlife margins, as they devastate insect life, reduce wild flowers and cause an ugly mat of coarse vegetation to smother the hedge.

If you have a long run of garden hedge, traditional winter trimming with hook and crook is enjoyable work. The crook is cut from a suitable branch and twig, in the shape of a tick. It is used to hold down the growth with one hand while cutting with the hook in the other, then to pull the cut growth away from the hedge. For the less able, an electric reciprocating hedge-trimmer may be easier, but tends to produce a uniform, urban appearance.

Skim off any bramble whips on the hedge side to about nine inches long, leaving all the rosettes and leafy tufts of herbaceous plants untouched to grow and flower next year.. Woody shoots then need removing back to the stones with secateurs or by skilful use of a bill-hook. Bushes and brambles on the top of the hedge can be pruned in winter to keep them from arching too far. For a

By hook and by crook the hedge will be trimmed - but don't forget frequent use of the sharpening stone to make it easy.

natural look, the too-long branch of bush or tree should be cut back to a fork or to the main stem or trunk, not cut off half way along. Winter weather will take care of the past season's herbaceous growth on the sides of the hedge, meanwhile it harbours many useful invertebrates and hibernating insects, protects the stone and earth structure from wind, rain and frost, and self-seeds for permanent floral succession.

The best way to look after a Cornish hedge is to use secateurs. On fine days from November to February this is pleasant, satisfying work, and minimises damage to the hedge and its wildlife. If carefully done this method will greatly enhance them. Brambles and tree seedlings or suckers growing out of the side of the hedgebank should be removed, cutting them off sharply right back to the stones. Working by hand you can leave any stem with a chrysalis or cocoon attached, and remove it next time after the moth or butterfly has emerged.

Removing a bramble plant from the face of a Cornish hedge with secateurs. Clip through the root beneath the knob from which the shoots emerge.

Use the secateurs to sever the plant just below the place (often an actual knob) where the leaves or shoots emerge. The root is left in the undisturbed soil, and continues to provide the vital binding which holds the stones in place. If the plants regrow, cut them out again, and again. They will soon die, and their roots gradually rot and be replaced by others of the more desired species that you encourage. Because the cut tops are individually removed, the hedge will look tidy with no ragged ends. The dormant or leafy winter growth, crowns and clumps of flowers, ferns and grasses are left untouched. Doing it this careful way, sleeping wildlife on the twigs and in the stems and tussocks is left undisturbed, and the next season's floral display is undamaged.

In early spring pull cleavers (goose-grass) and nettles off their roots. In time they will die out. Cut off bracken 'crooks' individually when they first appear, before the 'crosiers' uncurl. Heavy nettle roots running over the face of a neglected garden hedge can be largely removed in winter with the aid of secateurs, peeling away the network of thick yellow active roots while leaving the harmless thin roots cut off between the stones. Look out for loosened stones, clip the roots away carefully (don't pull them) and then tap any loose stones in gently. So as not to risk breaking the stone with the heavy hammer use a piece of wood for a shock absorber, or use the butt end of a long piece of wood such as a fencing stake to knock the stone and its immediate neighbours back in until they are tight. Block tightly with a stone any hole big enough for a rat or rabbit to enter.

The old pink cabbage rose (Rosa centifolia) growing untended in a wild garden along with goutweed and herb robert. Many old-fashioned roses prefer not to be pruned and don't have to be sprayed or fertilised, so are ideal for growing naturally in a Cornish hedge with wild flowers which cannot stand an enriched soil.

If there are a lot of big weeds like hogweed, docks, ragwort and thistles, they

can be removed by cutting them out at the stone face in early spring. Use the secateurs or an old kitchen knife sharpened square across the end of the blade, and cut through the root as far back as you can without disturbing the soil between the stones. Never pull them out. If you are keen on wildlife gardening it pays to leave a few each of the docks, thistles and hogweed to flower and seed as they are much beloved by many beneficial insects.

Unless the hedge is very shady and you like the neat evergreen appearance, ivy should be discouraged from spreading over the side of the hedge. In Cornwall we have the Irish ivy *Hedera hibernica* which is particularly fond of running all over the surface, and in time it prevents nearly all other plants from growing.

After the winter trimming and early spring weeding, no other work should be done until November. This system makes a beautiful wild flower hedge with very low maintenance, because progressively less work is needed as in time the flowers multiply and rank weeds disappear.

Keep sprays and fertiliser away from the hedge as they only encourage the nasties. A metre-wide wildlife margin along the foot of the hedge helps access for the gardener as well as making a tussocky wild flower habitat. Remove rank aggressive weeds in this verge in the same way as for the hedge itself. Trim the growth on the margin down to about nine inches with a hook or scythe in January and February.

Wildlife margin along the Cornish hedge in a garden gives a riot of wild flowers and roses. Here a young plant of the rambler 'Chevy Chase', its crimson blooms extremely resistant to rain, is co-existing happily with red campion, foxgloves and other wild flowers and grasses.

If stones and soil from the hedge find their way down on to the wildlife margin, the stones must be put back, and the soil returned to the top of the hedge for recycling. Put any fallen stone back immediately into its place while the socket is fresh and damp. Be sure to replace it exactly as it was before, fitting into its own mould, and then tap it back into place as described.

HEDGE LAYING, LAYERING, AND COPPICING

On farms the purpose of hedge-laying is to make a stock-proof barrier. In the garden, a stock-proof barrier may be needed if a field is the other side; a neighbour's bullocks are not the most welcome guests among the flowerbeds. A laid hedge also helps to keep out intruders and gives shelter. In exposed gardens where laying is not practicable, long-term shelter and a good barrier can be got by planting tough shrubs such as gorse, ivy, privet, blackthorn, holly or hawthorn on the hedge-top, and allowing species roses such as *Rosa helenae* or the native *Rosa canina* to grow through them.

Hedge-laying is where the straight stem of a sapling is part-cut near its base, bent over to a low slanting angle and tied in. The following year it sprouts new vertical growths along its length, making the hedge look as if it has been planted with young trees. Not every stem is laid; the hedger will select the best ones, and cut the rest down to ground level. Hedge-laying is a skilled craft, and amateur attempts can look awful. In most parts of Cornwall, laying the growth on top of Cornish hedges is neither traditional nor even possible. The young saplings do not grow straight or tall enough, and the cuts are liable to introduce disease.

The traditional alternative is layering, not laying. The branch of a bush or sapling already growing on the hedge-top is bent over (arched not broken), the end embedded in the earth with the growing tip exposed, and held down by a stone to grow roots. The twig can take a year to root beneath the stone, and during this time it should not be allowed to be smothered by grass. The advantage of layering, for a garden hedge, is that it fills any gaps that might otherwise admit both two-legs and four. It also allows a varied selection of hedge-top shrubs and trees to enhance the wildlife value and the interest of the scene, whereas laid hedges are nearly always of one species only.

Rosa helenae makes a good barrier, has thousands of little creamy flowers that attract bumblebees and heavily scent the air, and produces such masses of hips to brighten the garden hedge in autumn that birds can freely take their share.

Trees on top of the hedge need looking after, in agreement with neighbours. Broad-leaved trees can be selectively coppiced, that is, sawn off at about 20 inches (0.5m) above hedge-top, in rotation, each trunk being individually removed when it is "as thick as a man's thigh at breast-height". Coppiced trees are less likely to blow down than un-coppiced trees, and give good shelter to the garden without shading it too much. Because only one or two trunks are taken out of the hedge at a time, it does not mar the appearance or reduce the shelter too much when the work is done, and new growth soon fills in the gap.

Coppice only during the months October to January and leave behind, on top of the hedge, some of the cut wood to be decayed by fungi and insects. Do not cut all the trees at once. Only take the trunks that are getting too big, and leave several years between each coppicing. Paint the stumps, and let them regrow naturally.

Oak and hawthorn growing together on a garden hedge can be kept under control by coppicing. Hawthorn also takes kindly to layering.

If the hedge is within some legally specified areas, or trees have to be felled, prior consent or license for work may be needed. Consult your District Council and the Forestry Commission. For maintenance work on hedges next to roads, the needs of traffic must be met; that is, growth must not be allowed to affect the driver's vision of the road ahead or to obscure road signs or street lighting. Trees and bushes must be lopped if necessary to give sufficient height over the pavement or highway. Otherwise only road junctions, blind corners or entrances and passing places should be trimmed during summer if necessary for safe traffic use and visibility.

For further reading on maintaining Cornish hedges please see the Cornish Hedges Library papers entitled How to Look After a Cornish Hedge, Wildlife and the Cornish Hedge, Restoring Biodiversity in Cornish Hedges, Repairing Cornish, Stone and Turf Hedges, Advice

for Working on Roadside Hedges, Trees in Hedges in Cornwall, and Cornish Hedges and the Climate Crisis. For investigating the age and origin of your hedge see How Old is That Cornish Hedge? and Who Owns That Cornish Hedge?

You are welcome to download these papers and photographs for your private use and study. If you use any of this material in any other way, the copyright holder and the Cornish Hedges Library must be acknowledged as the source - thank you.

The following titles are available at www.cornishhedges.co.uk

Advice for Working on Roadside Hedges	Mediæval Hedges in Cornwall (450AD - 1550)
Building Hedges in Cornwall	Modern Hedges in Cornwall (1840 - present day)
Building Turf Hedges	Mosses, Lichens, Fungi and Ferns in Cornish Hedges
Building and Repairing Cornish Stone Stiles	Pipe-laying and Other Cross-country Works Involving Hedges
Butterflies, Moths and Other Insects in Cornish Hedges	Post-Mediæval Hedges in Cornwall (1550 - 1840)
Check-list for Inspecting New or Restored Hedges in Cornwall	Prehistoric Hedges in Cornwall (5,000BC - 450AD)
Check-list of Types of Cornish Hedge Flora	Repairing Cornish Hedges and Stone Hedges
Code of Good Practice for Cornish Hedges	Repairing Turf Hedges
Comments on the © Defra *Hedgerow Survey Handbook* (1st Edition)	Restoring Biodiversity in Cornish Hedges
Comments on the © Defra *Hedgerow Survey Handbook* (2nd Edition)	Risk Assessment Guidance for working on Cornish Hedges
Cornish Hedges and the Climate Crisis	Roadside Hedges and Verges in Cornwall
Cornish Hedges in Gardens	The Curse of Rabbits in Cornish Hedges
Cornish Hedges on Development and Housing Sites	The Life and Death of a Flailed Cornish Hedge
Gates and Gateways in Cornish hedges	Trees on Hedges in Cornwall
Geology and Hedges in Cornwall	Unusual Old Features in Cornish Hedges
Glossary of some Cornish Words used in the Countryside	Who Owns that Cornish Hedge?
Hedges in the Cornish Landscape	Wildlife and the Cornish Hedge
How to Look After a Cornish Hedge	
How Old is That Cornish Hedge?	
Literature Sources	