



## Flowering Shrubs: Cotoneaster

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[Wikipedia](#)

### Cotoneaster is a Multipurpose Shrub

*Cotoneaster* (ko-TONE- e- aster) is a member of the rose family, native of Europe, Asia (mountains of China and Himalayas) and North Africa. It can be deciduous or evergreen and has a great diversity in size and form. There are over 70 species and many hybrids. It is frequently used as ground cover as well as foundation planting, spilling over rock walls. Some varieties are used in alpine gardens growing at high altitudes or as hedge screenings.

This multipurpose shrub delivers flowers, produces fruit in a form of berries and has attractive fall colours. The structural branches grow in a herringbone pattern, with leaves that are ovate to lanceolate in shape. Flowers are produced in late spring and colour can vary from white to various shades of pink and red. Fruit is small and comes in various shades of pink, red or orange, making this an attractive fall interest shrub.

### Preferred Conditions

*Cotoneaster* prefers full sun or partial shade. It thrives in fertile soil and most are drought tolerant. This flowering shrub tolerates infertile soil as long as it's well drained. Salt, wind and pollution are also tolerated. Cotoneaster requires watering only if there is a long dry spell.

### Care and Pruning

Pruning is not required other than to shape the plant if it gets out of control or to prune out damaged branches. Any pruning needs to be done by removing the whole branch up to the base. Pruning could be done any time. Mulching should be done under the low growing shrubs to suppress the weeds.

### Varieties to Plant

***Cotoneaster apiculatus*** - Cranberry Cotoneaster - Low sprawling style has glossy leaves with bright red berries. Grows in Zone 4-7, not as drought tolerant as some. 2' to 3' tall with 6' spread. Use as ground cover and for erosion control.

***Cotoneaster dammeri*** - Bearberry Cotoneaster - Low growing and used as ground cover. Evergreen, moderately fast growing. Zone 5-9. Has glossy leaves and long trailing stems. "Coral Beauty" is the most popular and "Low-fat" is a quickest growing but only 30 cm height. "Canadian Creeper" will grow only to 15 cm in height.

***Cotoneaster microphyllus*** – Little leaf, slow growing, not very common. Sometimes used in containers, small rock gardens and bonsai. Zone 5-7.

***Cotoneaster divaricatus*** - Spreading Cotoneaster – 5' to 6' in height, dark green glossy leaves, used for formal hedges. Zone 4-7. Small pink flowers and bright red fruit are attractive to birds.

***Cotoneaster lucidus*** – Deciduous medium size 10-12' tall used for privacy and hedges. Long spreading branches. Tolerates wind and salt and cold weather to Zone 4. Dark green leaves and pale pink flowers. Blooms early June.

### Problems you Might Encounter

*Cotoneaster* doesn't transplant well. It is susceptible to fire blight, spider mites and pear slugs.

Learn more about cotoneaster [here](#)>