

Determination of the Cotoneaster Collections in three European Botanical Gardens

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At the National Botanic Garden, Salaspils, Latvia, I worked with the Curator and Head of Dendrology, Dr. Raimonds Cinovskis, on the determination of the extensive collection of cotoneasters grown in this interesting garden.

Consisting of around 120 taxa, including some species from native sites in the Baltic States and Russia, this collection holds many fine specimens worthy of cultivation. Particularly attractive were the white flowered *Cotoneaster megalocarpus* and *C. submultiflorus*, and the pink flowered *C. roseus*. These three species all have red fruits in the autumn.

After gathering propagation and herbarium material from the gardens I travelled to Bjuv, in southern Sweden, to work with Dr. Bertil Hylmo, who has studied the genus *Cotoneaster* for the past 30 years and has a magnificent collection of around 300 taxa growing in his "Cotoneasteretum."

Many beautiful cotoneasters which could be—and should be—utilized by the nursery trade are grown in this Swedish garden.

We were joined by another expert on the genus *Cotoneaster*, Dr. Antonin Nohel, from Brno Botanic Gardens in the Czech Republic. Dr. Nohel was, until quite recently, the International Registrar for cultivars of *Cotoneaster* and has raised and selected many excellent cultivars which can be seen in Czech gardens.

Outstanding species in Bjuv included the following:

- *C. duthieanus*, a low growing shrub with large bright red fruits;
- *C. lucidus*, an extremely hardy species much used in Sweden as hedging, black fruited with brilliant red leaf colouring the autumn;
- *C. insculptus*, more attractive than the well known *C. sternianus* (below)
- *C. sternianus*, this species has shiny deep-veined leaves and orange fruits;
- *C. shansiensis*, a beautiful elegant shrub with pink flowers and pendulous apricot-coloured fruits, this species would be very useful grafted as a half standard for small gardens;
- *C. multiflorus*, laden with large wide-open white flowers, abundant red fruits in the autumn;
- *C. przewalskii*, flowers large and open, petals white and mauve, this species has purple young growth and dark red fruits;
- *C. ludlowii* with masses of white flowers and pinky-orange fruits;
- *C. albokermesinus*, a very unusual species, again with a profusion of white flowers, has fruits that begin white and ripen to a one-sided pinkish blush, extremely hardy, and as with many other deciduous cotoneasters, reasonably resistant to fire blight;
- *C. meiophyllus*, a species brought by the plantsman Roy Lancaster from Shanghai Botanic Garden, cream flowers early summer, orange fruits throughout the winter into spring;

- *C. microphyllus*, low growing, with white flowers and cherry-red fruits, in the British Isles shrubs grown as *C. microphyllus* are usually the closely related species *C. integrifolius*.