

Cotoneaster Removal & Control

The overview

Common Name: Cotoneaster Species (Wall Cotoneaster, Himalayan cotoneaster, Entire-leaved Cotoneaster, Hollyberry Cotoneaster, Small-leaved Cotoneaster)

Latin name: *Cotoneaster horizontalis* *Cotoneaster integrifolius* *Cotoneaster simonsii*

Cotoneaster bullatus *Cotoneaster microphyllus*

In Detail

- Species are native to East Asia and were first introduced to the UK in 1824 as ornamental plants.
- There are now over 100 species cultivated in the UK, not all species are listed as Schedule 9 Species.
- Once established the species can dominate areas outcompeting native flora creating dense thickets
- Seeds are spread over large areas by birds as they feed on the berries, seed longevity may be several years

Identification

- A large group of shrubs and small trees, some deciduous and some evergreen
- Wall Cotoneaster is the most widespread of the species in the UK and has distinctive flattened branches which spread horizontally in a 'herringbone' shape.
- Himalayan cotoneaster is an erect deciduous shrub which grows to 3-4 metres in height, the leaves of this species are 1.5-2.5 cm long
- Small-leaved cotoneaster is an evergreen species with very small leaves 0.5-0.8cm long
- All Cotoneaster species are thorn-less, leaves are shiny and hairless on the upper surface and slightly hairy on the underneath of the leaf
- The plants produce small white or pink flowers in spring and summer followed by red/orange berries in clusters

What's the problem?

What are the Legal Implications? *England

- Listed as a Schedule 9 species under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.
- It is an offence to plant or allow to spread onto adjacent land and into the wild.
- Possible fines and prison sentence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.
- It is not an offence to have Cotoneaster species on your land and you do not need to notify anyone on the presence of this species.
- Soils containing Cotoneaster species are classified as controlled waste and should be disposed of at licensed landfill.

Control Methods

Mechanical Control

- Young seedlings can be effectively pulled however larger plants will develop multiple stems from the large root mass making it difficult to remove the whole plant
- Root mass can be excavated to remove entire plant and prevent regrowth
- Material should be chipped or burnt on site or removed to licensed landfill as controlled waste

Chemical Control

- It is possible to spray smaller plants with herbicide however chemical uptake in larger plants is reduced
- Addition of wetting agents improve uptake of herbicide
- Larger plants should be stump treated after cutting to prevent regrowth