

Cotinus - Growing Guide

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Smoke bush, Smoke tree

At Caerhays we grow a number of different smoke bushes along the drive where they produce the most startling leaf colours in autumn. These bushy shrubs or small trees will achieve 10-15ft in maturity with a similar spread but, we find that giving them a hard pruning every 10 years or so, rejuvenates them completely. The leaf size on the vigorous new shoots increases and, more importantly, so does the autumn show. In a woodland context you can plant these plants in groups for maximum effect and those with purple leaves can make an effective backdrop to the herbaceous border.



Cotinus cut back

Purple leaved forms grow best in full sun. Cotinus are not fussy about soil conditions and all are totally hardy. They can readily be propagated by layering basal shoots or from softwood cuttings in the summer.

C. coccygria originates from China and S. Europe while *C. obovatus* is from the SE USA. Plant breeders continue to produce improved new

forms with attractive and different leaf colours in summer and autumn. C. 'Lilla' and C. 'Old Fashioned' were new to the Burncoose catalogue in 2019.

C. coccygia, the species, has green leaves which turn yellow to orange and red in autumn. The fruiting panicles or inflorescences are green at first; becoming grey as they mature.

C. coccygia 'Flame' has large green leaves which turn a brilliant red in autumn. The fruiting panicles are purple-pink. In maturity this variety can grow to 20ft.



Cotinus coccygia 'Flame'

C. coccygia 'Lilla' is a compact growing variety with red-purple leaves and panicles of fluffy pink flowers. A good contrast.



Cotinus coccygia 'Lilla'



Cotinus coccygia 'Lilla'



Cotinus coccygia 'Lilla'

C. coccygia 'Royal Purple' is perhaps the most popular form with striking deep purple foliage.

Cotinus coccygria 'Royal
Purple'

C. coccygria 'Young Lady' has enormous silky flowers with a tinge of pink.



Cotinus coccygria 'Young
Lady'



Cotinus 'Grace'



Cotinus 'Grace'



Cotinus 'Grace'



Cotinus 'Grace'



Cotinus coggygria 'Old Fashioned'



Cotinus coggygria 'Pink Champagne'



Cotinus coggygria 'Pink Champagne'



Cotinus coggygria
'Rubrifolius'

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