

## Fuchsia - Care Guide

### **Growing & Caring For Fuchias**

#### *Lady's eardrops*

Many people think of fuchsias as exemplary summer bedding plants or half hardy perennials which are not necessarily hardy enough to survive the winters outdoors especially in colder parts of the county and which should therefore be propagated each year from fresh cuttings overwintered in the greenhouse. There are some 8,000 different registered fuchsia cultivars and over 100 species.

My first interest in horticulture was in growing (and selling) these sorts of fuchsias. Only a very few survive in the borders at Caerhays 50 years on!

What Burncoose offers today are a selection of mainly very hardy fuchsias for the woodland garden or as permanent features in a herbaceous border. There are also some climbing fuchsias, a groundcover fuchsia and a few very popular hardier species and varieties to cheer up a shrub or herbaceous border. The pruning and care requirements for these different categories of fuchsia are quite different and it is easiest to deal with them individually.

### **Fully Hardy Fuchsias As Hedging Or As Shrubs**

*F. magellanica*, the Hardy fuchsia from Chile, flowers away here for months and months and long into autumn even displaying flowers after the leaf has fallen in a mild winter. These plants grow to around 4ft in height with, eventually, a similar spread. They do not really need any pruning but every 10 years or so cutting them back to say 12-24in of stem

or trunk will rejuvenate the plants at the expense of any flowering for a year or so. *F. magellanica* has long slender flowers with a scarlet calyx and violet petals.

*F. magellanica* 'Alba' has white flowers tinged mauve and can make a fairly informal hedge.

*F. magellanica* 'Aurea' has yellow foliage.

*F. magellanica* 'Versicolor' ('Tricolor') has pink and cream variegation in its leaves and purple and red flowers.

*F. 'Riccantonii'* is a superb hedging fuchsia. In the nursery we grow it on top of a stone faced earth bank as a windbreak. It grows to 6 or even 10ft in height and needs little pruning except perhaps to shape up the side growth. Its multitude of single flowers have scarlet tubes and dark purple corollas: these are much loved by bees and insects. In colder parts of the country your hedge may get a little dieback after a cold winter but pruning or clipping it back to where the stems are alive will lead it to regenerate quickly and flower away in the next season.

*F. exorticata* is an extraordinary New Zealand species which grows with us as an 8-10ft tall shrub. The flowers are yellowish-green with a purplish flush and appear, usually singly, from the trunks, stems and old wood. The peeling bark of this large shrub in maturity is a rather admirable attribute.

*F. hatschbachii* has proved a reliable and resilient species in the gardens here. It achieves a height of around 6ft as a bushy freestanding woodland plant. The slender leaves complement the thin dainty red and purple flowers.



Hardy Fuchsia after autumn pruning



Hardy Fuchsia after autumn pruning



Hardy Fuchsia after autumn pruning

F. 'Lady Boothby' and F. 'Lady in Black' are both hardy climbing fuchsias which can easily grow 8-10ft up a wall or fence. They will need a bit of tying in to get them going and to prevent them being blown about but the overall effect of large fuchsia flowers which you can look up at from below is spectacular. Again, these plants can be pruned from time to time to rejuvenate them, but they will regularly put up vigorous new shoots from the base anyway.

### **Tender Conservatory Fuchsias**

F. *microphylla* is a small shrub growing to around 3-4ft under glass. It is often used to break up summer bedding but is generally of limited hardiness outdoors. The tiny, solitary, but abundant flowers are normally pink or red.

F. *arborescens*, the Lilac fuchsia, is evergreen, comes from Mexico and is therefore a greenhouse plant. It grows as an erect shrub up to 6ft in height if you have room for it. It has large corymbs of rose-pink tubes and pale mauve corollas which are followed by spherical purple fruit. In a pot you will need to keep chopping it back to keep it under control.

F. *boliviana* from Peru also makes a wonderful greenhouse plant. It is a vigorous upright-growing plant which will need frequent chopping back. The enormous flower clusters are in panicles with single pale tubes and striking scarlet petals.

## **Hardy, Colourful Border Fuchsias**

You can see photographs of all the varieties which we offer below. These plants will need an annual prune back in spring to near ground level after a cold winter to encourage vigorous new growth and regeneration. In Cornwall, after a mild winter, where it is not at all unusual for some of these varieties to hold flowers well into December (even with few remaining leaves) this may well not be necessary every single year.

‘Chilli Red’ – compact habit with buds like chilli peppers.

‘Delta’s Sara’ – white calyces and semi double purplish blue corollas.

‘Fairy Lights’ – compact habit and pale pink flowers with rose centres.

‘Genii’ – compact habit and yellow leaves. Pink-purple flowers.

‘Hawkshead’ – pure white flowers with a greenish flush; upright growing.

‘Sunray’ – unusual variegated cream, green and red leaves. Pink flowers with purple corollas.

## **Hard Pruning - Video Tip**

View this video on Youtube here <https://www.youtube.com/fnAIJVXzVsc>

## **Six Weeks After Pruning - Video Tip**

After hard pruning this fuchsia in part one of this video, here you can see the regrowth six weeks later.

View this video on Youtube here <https://www.youtube.com/aMZnvueuXzY>

## **Fuchsia Procumbens**

View this video on Youtube here [https://www.youtube.com/XW34\\_zaa9pM](https://www.youtube.com/XW34_zaa9pM)

## **Propagation Fuchsia Arborescens - Video Tip**

View this video on Youtube here <https://www.youtube.com/nZ-fuATSZ-Q>

## **Fuchsia Hardwood Cuttings - Video Tip**

View this video on Youtube here <https://www.youtube.com/hD89TCgAJt0>

---

**Burncoose Nurseries: Gwennap, Redruth, Cornwall TR16 6BJ**

Telephone: +44 (0) 1209 860316 Fax: +44 (0) 1209 860011 Email: [info@burncoose.co.uk](mailto:info@burncoose.co.uk)

© Burncoose Nurseries 1997 - 2022