

Garrya - Growing Guide

Growing Garrya Elliptica

Garrya elliptica and its form with exceptionally long catkins, 'James Roof', is our bestselling evergreen wall shrub by far. While it is not exactly a climber as such, it can readily be trained up wires or trellis so that its upper branches are supported and its catkins displayed to best effect. You can also grow it as a windbreak beside a hedge where it may well need staking at first.

This garrya is a native of California and Oregon but has been grown in the UK since 1828. It is an especially common plant in Devon and Cornish gardens where it can grow up to 16ft tall with its 12-15in male catkins. Male and female catkins are borne on separate plants but you really only want to grow the male 'James Roof' form of *G. elliptica*.

This plant will grow in full sun or shade. With us it grows in the teeth of southerly and easterly gales without turning a hair. In much colder counties it will need wind protection for best results but this is now a common plant also in London gardens. Tolerating -10°C is a 'given' for this plant.

G. elliptica has ovate dark sea green or slightly greyish leaves. The clusters of silver-grey catkins with yellow anthers appear in January or February and remain on the plant long into summer which continues the unusual and pleasing effect. What else is in flower in your garden then?

Garrya are fairly easy to propagate from semi ripe new growth cuttings taken in June or July and put into a heated mist bench. Female forms of *G. elliptica* do, of course, set seeds but there is only one form to grow if you want these huge catkins every year!



Garrya elliptica



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Garrya elliptica James Roof



Garrya x thuretii

View this video on Youtube here <https://www.youtube.com/tjqRHLuEQJ0?rel=0>

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