

Gaultheria - Growing Guide

Growing Gaultheria

(formerly PERNETTYA)

Box berry

Gaultheria are tough rhizomatous or suckering evergreen shrubs which are grown for their flowers or, more particularly, their spectacular fleshy fruits. They like growing best in moist peaty soils which do not dry out and prefer to romp away in shade rather than full sun. Different forms are suitable for woodland planting and as groundcover on banks or in borders.

These plants are very easily propagated by digging up rooted suckers or spreading rhizomes for moving elsewhere. Fruits collected in the autumn can be sown (as seeds with the pith removed) in a cold frame in the autumn. Cuttings are easy too in summer but digging up suckers is easier still!

G. mucronata (*Pernettya mucronata*), Prickly heath, is a compact bushy shrub with toothed and spine tipped glossy leaves. The flowers appear in late spring or early summer and are urn shaped. They are usually white but sometimes flushed pink. You need to grow *G. mascula*, the somewhat dull, male form to ensure that the much more exciting female forms produce fruit. In older established gardens these are often common plants but, if your garden is isolated, you will need to acquire at least two plants – one of each sex. These plants eventually grow to 3 or 4ft in height with a similar spread.

The female berrying forms which we offer are:

‘Bells Seedling’ Bright red berries



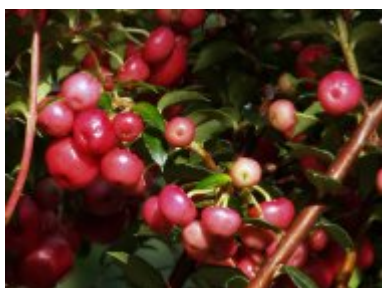
'Mulberry Wine' White flowers and magenta-purple berries



Gaultheria mucronata
'Mulberry Wine'



Gaultheria mucronata
'Mulberry Wine'



Gaultheria mucronata
'Signal'



Gaultheria mucronata
'Signal'

G. procumbens, Wintergreen, is a creeping evergreen which grows no more than 6in or so with a much larger spread. The leaves have a strong fragrance when crushed. White or pale pink racemes of flowers are followed by aromatic scarlet fruit.



Gaultheria procumbens
'procumbens'



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