

Genista - Growing Guide

Growing Genista

Broom

This genus is very similar to *Cytisus* with similar pea-like yellow flowers. The three species which we currently offer are rather different in ultimate size but they are all hardy, attractive, deciduous plants suitable for growing in full sun in a herbaceous or shrub border.

They will tolerate hot dry banks where they can literally get baked in the heat. This, combined with poorish soils, encourages a profusion of flowering in the summer months.

Taller growing varieties will make exponential growth and some pruning back of this new growth after flowering may well be sensible to keep the plant under control. However, you must be careful not to prune back hard into the old wood as this will not so readily reshoot and you may end up with a lopsided or unsightly plant.

These plants also have pea like seedpods which ripen quickly after flowering and are easy to collect and store for sowing in the autumn or spring. If you catch them fresh germination should be quick and plentiful although this is best done in the greenhouse rather than a cold frame. Left to their own devices *Genista* are very good at self-seeding and colonising any bare ground nearby.

G. aetnensis, the Mount Etna broom, is an upright shrub growing 15ft or more which will eventually try to turn into a small tree. It has slender weeping branches and bright green new shoots. Small leaves appear initially on young stems but soon drop off and vanish. Huge terminal racemes form along the pendant new shoots in mid to late summer.



Genista aetnensis



Genista hispanica

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Genista lydia



Genista lydia



Genista lydia

Hard pruning in spring.

View this video on Youtube here https://www.youtube.com/rPy_qHo7-mY

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