

## 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.

*G. hispanica*, Spanish gorse, is a very different plant. This is a mound forming, spiny, deciduous shrub with leaves which are only present on flowering branches. The flowers appear in terminal racemes in late spring on into early summer and create an impressive blanket of yellow. The overall height is about 30in with a much greater spread.

*G. lydia* is a dome-shaped small deciduous shrub growing to only about 2-3ft in height. Its grey-green branches are prickly tipped and have small blue-green leaves. The flowers appear in profusion in early summer. This species originates also from southern European countries.

## **Hard Pruning Of Genista - Video Tip**

Hard pruning in spring.

View this video on Youtube here [https://www.youtube.com/rPy\\_qHo7-mY](https://www.youtube.com/rPy_qHo7-mY)

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**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)

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