

## Halimodendron halodendron - Growing Guide

### Growing Halimodendron Halodendron

#### *Salt tree*

Halimodendron are a genus of just one deciduous and spiny shrub which is related to Caragana and grows in salty flood plains from the Ukraine on into Asia. While this is perhaps not a shrub for a dedicated collector of rare and unusual plants it certainly has its uses for us in Cornwall in the most exposed seaside gardens where the soil consists mainly of dry sand and salty conditions predominate so that not much else will grow.

It is perhaps a useful alternative to Tamarix or Lycium in a coastal boundary hedge or it can perhaps be integrated into a hedge with both of the others. Its spines can certainly keep out unwanted visitors from the beach and we used it successfully for just this purpose in a seaside garden at Seaview in the Isle of Wight. However it also grows perfectly well in an open well drained site.

H. halodendron has silvery foliage and silver-grey leaves which each end in a spine. In June or July the plant produces racemes of pea like violet to purple pink flowers from the leaf axils. The flower racemes are only about 1.5in long but they are produced in profusion.

As its pea shaped flowers and seed pods suggest the seed are readily germinated in spring or autumn in a cold frame. Root cuttings are certainly a possibility. This plant benefits from hard and regular pruning once established to encourage vigorous new growth in the spring and more flowers. It dislikes waterlogged and poorly drained soils and young plants especially may rot off in such situations.



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