

Hawthorn

About hawthorn

Mature trees can grow up to 15m though they are often smaller if they are growing in a hedgerow. This species is easily confused with blackthorn and the two often grow near each other.

Hawthorn can support up to 300 different types of insect, including a number of moth caterpillars, bees and other types of pollinating insects. Dormice eat hawthorn flowers and migrating birds such as redwings, fieldfares and thrushes eat the haws. Hawthorn also provides good nesting habitat for birds.

The timber of hawthorn is very hard and close grained and uses include making veneers and cabinets, boxes, tool handles and boat parts. It burns well, making good firewood and charcoal. The young leaves, flower buds and young flowers are all edible and can be added to salads. The haws are rich in antioxidants and can be made into ketchups, jellies and wines.



Identifying hawthorn

#1 Location Traditionally used as a hedging plant so found in hedgerows or old boundaries where they might have been left unmanaged and grown into trees. You will also find them in woodland and amongst scrub.



Hawthorn buds

#2 Buds and fruits – buds emerge from the same point as the spine. Deep red fruits, known as haws, develop after pollination.

#3 Bark is grey brown and knotted. When the tree is older, the bark starts flaking off in rough rectangles

Where to spot hawthorn trees in Torfaen

Hawthorns are very common and will be found in any hedgerow in Torfaen. You will also find bigger and more mature trees in places like Blaen Bran Community Woodland.

Hawthorn berries



Hawthorn bark

