

## We Like Fastigate Malcolm Scott

Our garden is tiny, tiny. Any weeping trees, whose grace I admire, or any wide shrubs are impossible for us. So we have a predominance of small trees, shrubs and plants which have a fastigiated habit, and take up little space. They allow us to have choice (ours!) wider plants among them. We have several dwarf shrubs, a *Euonymus alatus* 'Timber Creek', *Hydrangea quercifolia* 'Pee Wee' and *Azalea x prattii* 'Denny's White'.

Back now to 'fastigate'. We have some conifers – *Juniperus communis hibernica* (pruned to six feet) and two yews – *Taxus baccata* 'Standishii' (golden) and *Taxus baccata* 'Fastigiata'. All fastigate yews have arisen from the one tree at Florence Court in Ireland, which is now given starred protected status. In a large pot we have an erect *Camellia sasanqua* 'Narumigata' – white flowered with a broad orange centre, and scented too. It is now out in flower in October, usually November. In a pot is erect *Pittosporum tenuifolium* 'Oliver Twist'. We train several *Philadelphus* to an erect shape, such as *P.* 'Mrs E L Robinson', *P.* 'Innocence' and *P.* 'Snowflake'. We have planted *Cercidiphyllum japonicum* 'Red Fox', kept to seven feet, its leaves gifting a bright colour. One of our roses is fastigiated – patio *Rosa* 'Warm Welcome', an orange delight. Lastly, in a big pot is *Viburnum furcatum*, white flowered with richly veined leaves. Ours is happily erect – they're usually bushy.

Now to fastigiated plants of which there are many of course. We shall name ones which are our favourites. So we have several foxgloves and Verbascums – we like *Verbascum chaixii* 'Album'; next dwarf delphiniums, dwarf *Kniphofia*, lilies, scented phloxes and a nice clump of *Gladiolus tristis*. By lifting the skirts of other small shrubs we have planted low-growing and prostrate plants and alpines such as Ajugas, Vincas, thymes and *Dianthus*. Like most gardeners we have bulbs wherever possible!

However, to offset and add to our tiny patch we do have reasonably long wooden fences. Trellis lined, they support various roses, *Clematis*, *Chaenomeles*, winter jasmine, honeysuckles and *Ribes*. The latter are *Ribes laurifolium* and "buffalo" *R. odoratum*. We also have the yellow-variegated leaved *Hydrangea petiolaris* 'Miranda', just now flowering after seven years! Mostly, in fence shade, we like our ferns.

My wife is the gardener now, and due to advancing years I can now only admire the year-through colours from our windows, both of our front and back gardens. They are a joy to us both.