

## Rowan

*Sorbus aucuparia*



Rowan, also known as Mountain Ash, is one of the most familiar trees in Ireland. Despite its common name, Rowan is not related to Ash, but it is in fact a member of the rose family (*Rosaceae*).

Seed production begins when the tree is about 15 years old. You could see its beautiful flowers in May and June, together with a wide range of pollinators, including many species of flies, bees and beetles. This time of year, we can see its bright red berries ripen and ready to provide juicy food for a big variety of birds, which then distribute the seeds in their droppings. The seeds usually germinate in the first or second spring after the berries have been produced and the tree can live up to 100 years!

Interestingly, fruiting is irregular in harsher environment and berries are not produced every year in some countries. It is these years when we can observe a bigger number of visiting Waxwings in winter, mainly because of the insufficient berry crop up in Scandinavia.

Rowan trees are very hardy, tolerant of most conditions and can tolerate extreme colds. They are also considered as one of the best trees for a wildlife garden.

Do you have one in your backyard? And do you use its berries for a homemade jelly? Let us know!