

9

HAWTHORN

Crataegus

 1986?

The hawthorn is also known as the May-tree because it is at its most beautiful in May when it is covered in clusters of creamy pink and white flowers. It has always been seen as a symbol for pure, innocent, young love. Flowering hawthorn twigs have been worn by brides since time immemorial. The hawthorn is native to Western Europe and is shrouded in folklore. The Celts regarded it as a holy tree created by a bolt of lightning and it was considered extremely unlucky to cut one down. The oldest tree in France is a hawthorn dating from the third century AD. It is said that the crown of thorns worn by Christ at his crucifixion was made of hawthorn branches. The red, oval berries, known as haws, are edible and soldiers used to make a type of coffee from them in the First World War. The wood is hard and resistant to rot. It is prized for its use in making small sturdy objects like tool handles. The wood burns easily and gives off a lot of heat; ideal for baking bread!

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