

Japanese Yellow Rose

The attractive ornamental flower

Internet Gardener

Kerria japonica is the gardener's flower, intimately known as Japanese Yellow Rose, as it is often used with double-flowered cultivar. For some reason, growers and gardeners hardly include this plant in their mix. However pictures say one thing. It deserves a second look, doesn't it?

After William Kerr, the gardener, introduced this cultivar, the plant became native to eastern Asia, China, Japan and Korea. The scientific name is also used as a common name Kerria

It grows to 1-3 m tall, with weak arching stems often scrambling over other vegetation or rocks. The leaves are alternate, simple, 4-7 cm long, with a sharply serrated margin. The flowers are bright yellow, with five petals. The fruit is a dry single-seeded achene 5 mm long.

Kerria japonica is a hardy deciduous shrub that matures at



3 to 5 feet in height. It is a dense mounded plant with numerous slender, zig-zagging branches that emerge at ground level. The beauty of Kerria is found in its flowers, stems and foliage. The bright yellow flowers are noticeable reminiscent of an old fashioned rose with its five petals.

The flowers clearly make this plant a member of the Rosaceae family. A number of yellow flowers create a colorful show, before the emergence of leaves. As an added benefit, Kerria will often rebloom off and on all summer long. The effect is beautiful and rewarding. Kerria is also blessed with attractive ornamental stems. From autumn to spring, its bright

kelly green stems create a wonderful, fresh impression. Having visited the Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Gardens in early spring a few years back, I distinctly remember big green drifts of Kerria. I was surprised and delighted to see it used throughout their brightly landscaped grounds. Around every corner we are greeted by a mass of bright green. This unique combination of colour and zigzagging lines creates a lasting impression.

You also have to appreciate the clean and simple foliage of Kerria. The leaves appear birch-like at first glance with its narrow triangular shape, but unlike birch, its leaves are brighter, doubly serrated, and display a pronounced puckering between the leaf veins. Always clean and green the foliage is a distinctive asset. This is not a fussy plant hard

to grow or manage. Quite the opposite, Kerria is happy in any reasonable well-drained earth. It requires a little fertility, and seems to flower best if left alone. Unlike other members of the rose family, Kerria has no serious insect of disease problems. Remarkably the flower becomes strong when grown in half-shelter to fully shaded locations. Full sun is also a solid option, but causes a few problems. The flowers do not hold up and it can show some stem die-back if exposed to winter sun. Neither of these problems are severe, but both can distract from the beauty of the plant. The plant does not produce a heavy, poorly drained soil. It will languish and grow smaller by the year. As far as ongoing maintenance, I personally feel this plant benefits from an occasional hard pruning. Cutting the plant to the ground produce a fuller plant, brighter stems and improved flowering.

The well-liked cultivar of Kerria is the old fashioned double flowered form, Kerria j. 'Pleniflora'. Its yellow button-like flowers look like a chrysanthemum, and at peak bloom they polka dot the plant to create a distinct look. Kerria 'Pleniflora' is not one of my favorite plants. To me it looks too contrived. I much prefer the simplicity of the single flowered forms.

Two of the best single flowered cultivars are 'Honshu' and 'Golden Guinea'. I can detect only slight and inconsequential

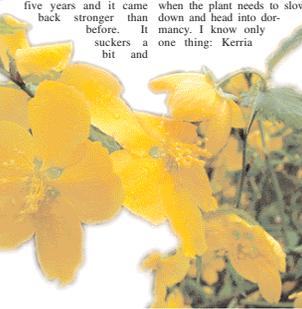


differences between these two plants. Both were selected for their large single flowers. If I had to choose only one of them I would pick 'Honshu' because its flowers are slightly larger and they have a soft and pleasing fragrance. Dr. Clifford Parks introduced the plant. Many people choose 'Golden Guinea' strictly because of its name. The name properly describes the size and color of the bloom. No the name Guinea does not refer to a bird or some exotic country, it refers to a large gold coin.

My Kerria japonica 'Picta' is a shrub more and more gardeners should try. My original plant in my privacy fence has done quite well. I pruned it back hard after about five years and it came back stronger than before. I know only one thing: Kerria

one of the suckers ended up on the south side of the fence, by the east side of my house, and I let it grow into a shrub of its own. It has never gotten as large as the one that has more shade. I do have to prune out the occasional all green branch, but it is not a big deal. So far so good. Shade? Check. Well-drained? Check. Pruned? No, so I did, toward early fall of that year, when I also cleared the ground in that area of English ivy, ripped the ivy out of the ground, and cut it away from other plants (though there aren't many there to start with). No roots were ripped from the ground; I didn't lop it off "to the ground"; I left some canes (though they were all brittle BTW) 2 ft. high, others were cut (or "snapped") just about to the ground.

Fall pruning can at times encourage growth at a time when the plant needs to slow down and head into dormancy. I know only one thing: Kerria



Dingo Species close to domestic dogs



The Dingo, *Canis lupus dingo* or *Warrigal* is a type of Australian canid, which was thought to have descended from the Iranian Wolf (*Canis lupus pallipes*). DNA analysis has shown it to be more closely related to domestic dogs, suggesting that they were introduced from a population of domesticated dogs, possibly at a single occasion during the Austronesian expansion into Island Southeast Asia.

It is commonly known as an Australian wild dog, but is not restricted to Australia, nor did it originate there. Modern dingoes are found throughout Southeast Asia, mostly in small pockets of remaining natural forest, and in mainland Australia, particularly in the north. They have features in common with both wolves and modern dogs, and are regarded as more or less unchanged descendants of an early ancestor of modern dogs. The name dingo comes from the language of the Eora Aboriginal people, who were the original inhabitants of the Sydney area. The New Guinea Singing Dog is also classified as *Canis lupus dingo*.

Dingoes are mostly seen alone, though the majority belong to packs, which rendezvous once every few days to socialise or mate. Scent marking, howling and stand offs against rival packs increase in frequency during these



times. Packs of dingoes can number three to twelve in areas with little human disturbance, with distinct male and female dominance hierarchies determined through aggression. Successful breeding is typically restricted to the dominant pair, though subordinate pack members will assist in rearing the puppies.

The size of a dingo's territory has little to do with pack size, and more to do with terrain and prey resources. Dingoes in southwestern Australia have the largest home ranges. Dingoes will sometimes disperse from the natal home range, with one specimen having been recorded to travel 250 kilometers (155 miles).

Dingoes do not bark as much as domestic dogs, who can be very loud, and they howl more frequently. Three basic howls with over 10 variations have been recorded. Howling is done to attract distant pack members and it repels intruders. In chorus howling, the pitch of the howling increases with the number of participating members. Male scent marks more frequently than females, peaking during the breeding season.

The sight of a spider alone freaks out many, although it has hardly anything to do with spider bite. The biped's vulnerability to these arthropods mainly stem from the venom, which is now being proved to be fatal sometimes.

Every spider bite doesn't have room for venom, and whatever venom is based on the spider category and the circumstances. Some spider bites do leave a large enough wound that infection may be a concern, and other species are known to consume prey which is already dead, which also may pose a risk for transmission of infectious bacteria from a bite. However it is generally the toxicity of spider venom which poses the most risk to human beings.

All spiders are capable of producing venom, with the exception of the hackled orb-weavers, the *Holarctidae*, and the primitive *Mesothelae*. (Other arachnids often confused with spiders, such as the harvestman and sun spiders, also do not produce venom.) Even so, only a small percentage of species have bites which

A spider's threat



pose a danger to people. Many spiders do not have mouthparts capable of penetrating human skin. While venom is by definition toxic substances, most spiders do not have sufficiently toxic venom (in the quantities delivered) to require medical attention, and of those only a few are known to produce fatalities.

Spider venoms work on one of two fundamental principles; they neither attack the nervous system

nor tissues surrounding the bite, but in some cases might attack vital organs and systems. Two deadly spiders are brown widow spider and black widow spider. Bites from both poisonous and non-poisonous spiders cause local redness, irritation.

An individual can rarely have an allergic reaction to a spider bite, even to a bite from a non-poisonous spider.

Remedies for a spider bite:

- Wash the site of the spider bite well with soap and water.
- Apply a cool compress or ice pack over the spider bite location.
- Over-the-counter pain relievers may be used to relieve symptoms.
- Do not give aspirin to children; use acetaminophen or ibuprofen instead.
- Call the doctor or seek emergency treatment if the victim is a young child, if any signs of an allergic reaction occur, if the bite area becomes infected, or if the victim develops a rash or severe illness.

MY NOTES ON SAMSON - 14

The chap is a real spot of a whack at putting him in the cage. I have often seen them trying out the fullest of their strength, sometimes in vain.

Things worsen when the folks dare drop in without caring a little about telephone manners. Their telephone manners rest on the mobile phones, which they use only at our gate step. It's too late to fox Samson into his abode. Samson never wants to go to his place, unless we leave him alone. We all have to rake our brains to come out with something to lure him into his abode. Well, that's a different story.

Once a stranger turned up with no telephone manners, Samson has started his usual symphony. Enter the mother, and the symphony reaches zenith, letting neither party hear each other.

"Is this Mr. So and So's place?" "Yes, it is." Mother replied. "Who is this I am speaking to?" "Mrs. So and So." "No I want your name, please."

Samson grabbed the document and made a dash around the garden, making mother look desperate.

After effects of ill-training have just started off, when Samson is up to that kind of mischief, nobody can make him do otherwise. He has his own way, unless we feign disinterest. Leave him like that for a little while with no signs of stealing the show, Samson will soon get fed up and gets tired of what's in his mouth. Even so, it's still too early to go get hold of that. Samson is well used to this strategy. He won't leave the thing for sometime, but slowly he loses interest.

We should still feign our disinterest, go towards Samson, pat him and trick him into cage.

Now is the best moment to get hold of the tattered document. Father will have a swell time going through the document for sure.

Join us every Saturday. Write to us: **Flowers and Pets Daily News Features**, Lake House, Colombo 10. Fax: 011-2343694. E-mail: features@dailynews.lk