

Spindle *Euonymus europaeus*

Spindle is a small , delicate, native deciduous tree which can grow to 9 metres. It favours chalky soil and it can be seen on the woodland edges and in the younger hedges on Magog Down.



Young bark and twigs are deep green. As the tree ages the bark becomes grey with vertical stripes.

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Flowers grow in clusters in May and June. Spindle flowers have both male and female reproductive parts. The flowers are a rich source of pollen and nectar for insects which pollinate them.



Leaves are shiny and slightly waxy, with tiny sharp teeth along the edges. They turn a rich pinky-red in autumn.

The leaves are eaten by the caterpillars of moths and the Holly Blue butterfly. The leaves are attractive to aphids which provide food for hoverflies, ladybirds and lacewings.



Caterpillars of the Spindle Ermine moth

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Spindle is at its loveliest in autumn when its leaves turn pinkish-red and the fruits ripen. It has very unusual fruit, with distinctive, vivid coral- pink capsules with four lobes, which split to reveal bright orange berries which are called arils.



Interesting Facts:

Spindle wood is hard, creamy-white and fine-grained.

In the past the wood was used for making spindles for spinning wool, from where the name comes.