



## CRATAEGUS

### 1. Native taxa

The main difficulty in recording *Crataegus* lies in distinguishing pure *C. laevigata* from its hybrid with *C. monogyna*. *C. laevigata* tends to flower 1-2 weeks before *C. monogyna*, and can then be picked out in more detail for later examination when the leaves are fully grown. The hybrid tends to overlap in flowering time.

The hybrid is probably frequent throughout the range of *C. laevigata* (e.g. Gosler 1990), and planted extensively elsewhere. Some populations show a complete gradation between *C. laevigata* and *C. monogyna* and it has been suggested all populations in south-east England are introgressed (Byatt 1975). However, good individuals of *C. laevigata* can be found, typically in undisturbed woodland on heavy clay, and when showing all the *C. laevigata* characters below can be recorded as that species. Note that a commonly planted cultivar of *C. monogyna* with very dissected leaves should not be taken as the typical form of that species! All binomials for the hybrid (e.g. *C. × media* Bechst.) require typification before they can be used unambiguously.

It is worth drawing attention to the recent studies in Ireland (Synnott 1978; Hackney 1986, Hackney & Hackney 1988) which have shown that *C. laevigata* occurs as a rare plant but more frequently than once supposed, and hybrids, showing every intermediate between the parents, are locally abundant. It is likely that most have been planted from imported quills - if this pattern has been repeated elsewhere in the British Isles *C. laevigata* and the hybrid could be widely over-looked.

Leaf shape is the best character. Specimens should include mature fruits, mature leaves selected from the short lateral spurs of shoots on the outside of the crown, and flowers if possible. Further characters are given by Byatt (1976). Sinus depth is measured along direction of veins.

	<i>C. laevigata</i> (Poir.) DC.	<i>C. laevigata</i> × <i>monogyna</i>	<i>C. monogyna</i> Jacq.
No. styles or fruit stones	2-3	1-2	1
Leaf shape	Shallowly 3-lobed to ± simple	Mainly 5-lobed	Laciniate, often 5- lobed
Lowest lateral sinus depth of leaf (see above)	Extending less than ½ way to midrib	Intermediate	Extending at least 2/3 way to midrib

# Plant Crib

Flower diameter	More than 15 mm	Variable	Up to 15 mm
Lowest lobe shape	Obtuse, broader than long; margin toothed nearly to base	Intermediate	Acute, longer than broad; margin entire or with a few teeth at apex
Habitat	Usually dense woodland on heavy soils	Hedges, edges of woods etc. on most soils	Usually in the open, on all soils
Growth habit in shade	Spreading under-shrub, usually flowering well even in deep shade	Intermediate	Vertical light-seeking small tree, flowering poorly in deep shade



*Crataegus laevigata*

*Crataegus monogyna*



*Crataegus laevigata* × *monogyna*

- References** Bradshaw, A. D. (1971). In *Hedges and local history*. Pp. 20-29. Standing conference for local history. London.  
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## 2. Foreign taxa

A useful guide to identification of the foreign *Crataegus* taxa which provides much useful information additional to Stace's *New Flora* is given by B. Wurzell (1992). *BSBI News* **61**: 42-45.