

#### Clachanburn comment 84

When I walk around our winter garden on a lovely sunny day there's a lot to enjoy. I am pleased we have kept large evergreen trees only where they do not affect our winter sun. The many tall deciduous trees are often underplanted with smaller evergreens including viburnums, some conifers, a new one I have is *Cupressus glabra Gray Lodge* and as the name suggests is a blue grey, and looks very good with the *Euphorbia characias wulfenii*. Also in this colour range an old fashioned shrub *Garrya Elliptica* with lovely hanging tassels. Another evergreen I love is *Ilex aquifolium angustifolium*, a small round holly with interesting leaf form, which I began growing several years ago, slow to establish but the first ones are now lovely, about ½ m tall and naturally ball shaped. In sheltered shady areas which do not dry out rhododendrons grow well. Smaller evergreens include ericas in shades of pink and white, and *Euphorbia amygdaloides robbiae*. For a splash of colour *Nandina domestica* with its crimson and scarlet leaves is quite striking. Now flowering are some deciduous shrubs which include Witch hazel, Winter sweet, *Daphne mezereum* and *Viburnum bodnantense* which all have a lovely fragrance. Don't forget the red and yellow stemmed Dogwoods, the bark of *Prunus serrula*, *Acer griseum*, Birches and the Alder tree catkins are attractive too.

We pruned the fruit trees last month and now is the time to give them a good spray of copper oxychloride and Conqueror spraying oil. The grape in the glasshouse can be pruned. Don't get excited about pruning roses yet, you may well be disappointed with die back later. Flowers which are coming through are the snowdrops, the winter roses, and many bulbs who I tell to go back to sleep, because I think a big winter blast is coming tomorrow