



Butterfly  
Conservation

## Common Barberry *Berberis vulgaris* - Planting and Aftercare

Thank you for supporting the Back from the Brink Project to conserve the Barberry Carpet moth *Pareulype berberata*. Common Barberry *Berberis vulgaris* itself isn't common in Britain so you will be helping both species along with at least 20 additional moth species that will benefit from the foliage, as well as providing berries for the birds and nectar from the flowers. If you want to find out more about the Back from the Brink Programme see <https://naturebftb.co.uk>

### Choosing a Planting location

- Plant away from arable land, at a distance of at least 20 metres, preferably further. This will minimise future issues with stem rust *Puccinia graminis*.
- Choose a spot that isn't too shady. Barberry does well in partial shade or in full sun.
- Plants need a bit of watering during periods of drought for the first few years. Barberry are tolerant of a range of soil types but do well on brashy Wiltshire soils that have underlying chalk. Avoid planting on pure chalk as this seems to be too dry and growth will be very slow.
- If your soil is waterlogged, choose an area which never floods. This is because Barberry Carpet pupate at the base of Barberry bushes over the winter so if they are waterlogged the pupae will rot.
- If you are planting a Barberry hedge or a clump of plants together, ensure plants are at least 50 cm apart. If you have lots of plants try and find a couple of locations for planting as this will provide more stepping stones of habitat for the moth in the landscape.
- Young plants are readily browsed by rabbits, deer and livestock so if that is a risk, using mesh tree shelters is a good idea. It is essential to provide air circulation around the plants as otherwise they are very prone to getting mildew. Using stakes and shelters helps mark out planting areas.



- Prune back vigorous competing vegetation as Barberry is slow-growing and easily swamped by other plants.
- Plant your plants between October and March to give them the best chance.

### Careful of the sharp spines!

**Pruning if necessary** should only be undertaken between October and early March. This is best for the health of plants but will also avoid disturbing any Barberry Carpet larvae should your Barberry be colonised. If you are planting a Barberry hedge, only cut part of your hedge each year, leaving more berries for the birds over winter.



Send details of areas where you have planted Barberry to Butterfly Conservation – [info@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:info@butterfly-conservation.org)

