

# Elder

## Habitat Hero

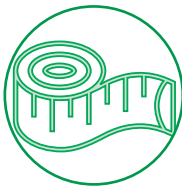


**Common Name:** Elder  
**Irish Name:** Trom  
**Scientific Name:** Sambucus nigra

### Seen in Ireland:

Flowers: May to July

Fruits: August to October



Elder trees are fairly short, often reaching about 10 m tall, the leaves are 8cm in length.



Elder is widespread and common. It is often found in woodlands, parks, along hedgerows and on waste ground.

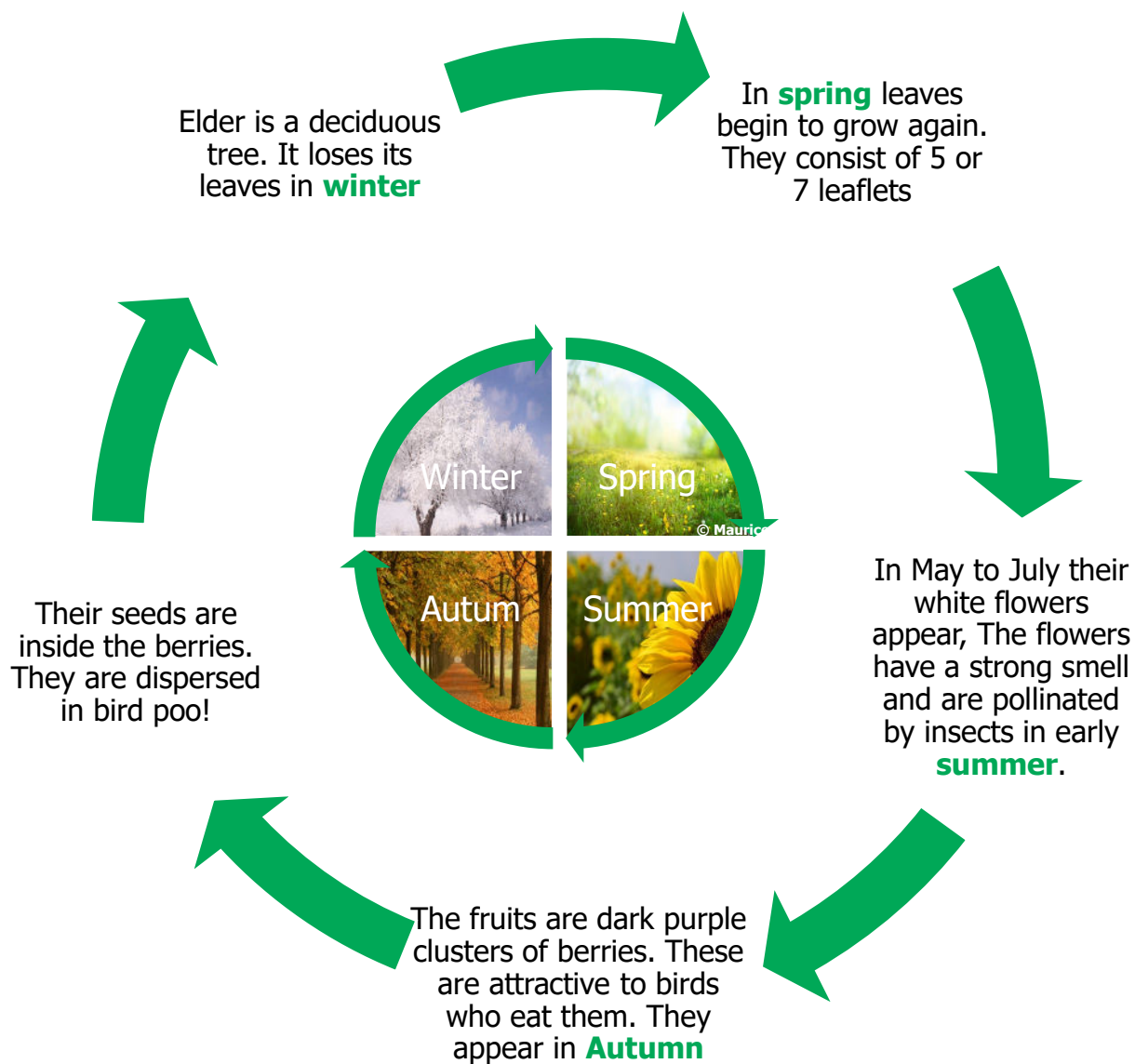


Elder grows in most soils but likes moist but well-drained soil best. It grows well in full sun to partial shade. Photosynthesis is the process in which green plants use sunlight to make their own food.



Elder trees can live for 60 years.

# Elder Life Cycle



\* Seed dispersal is how seeds are spread away from the parent plant so they can grow. Most seeds which grow in berries are dispersed when the berry is eaten by an animal who then moves elsewhere before "doing their business". The seed can move through the animal's body without being damaged. Animal poo is also very helpful for the seed as it contains nutrients which help it grow.

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## Some more Facts:

- Elder is a short tree with green leaflets (several leaves per stem) and flat clusters of white scented flowers.
- Their fruit is small black berries which hang in bunches.
- Elder has soft, spongy material on the inside of their stems. This makes them an unreliable tree to climb because their branches break easily!
- Elderflowers and Elderberries both the flowers and berries are often used as food sources.
- The flowers can be collected and used to make cordial (drink) or tea.
- The berries contain toxins which can make you sick if the berries are eaten raw however they are often used safely after cooking for jams and jellies and even wine!
- Elder stems are filled with a spongy white pith. This can be easily taken out leaving you with a hollow stem. Traditionally people used these hollowed out stems to make whistles, pea shooters and even jewellery!
- Did you know that elderflowers have often been used in herbal medicine to treat flus and colds? Recently research has shown they can even help people manage their diabetes!

