

RIBES

1. *Ribes*, vegetative

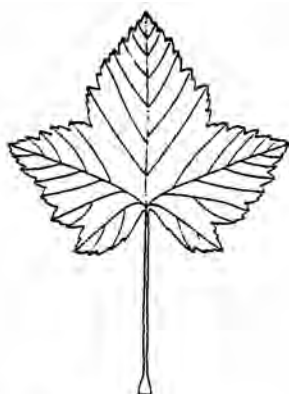
The British species of subgenus *Ribes* can be difficult to identify from sterile material. Leaf outlines for each species are given below, but leaf characters, including size, lobing, tothing, sinus-shape and indumentum vary much more than is apparent from most descriptions. Consistent characters are provided by the glands on the leaves and petioles, and for *R. nigrum* and *R. sanguineum* by the scent of the crushed foliage. *R. rubrum* and *R. spicatum* cannot be reliably separated using vegetative characters (see below), as they have similar glands, and the “typical” leaf type of each species is often found in the other; some garden cultivars may be *R. rubrum* × *R. spicatum*.

The yellow-flowered introduction *R. odoratum* (*R. aureum* auct.) is separable from the other species by the shape and colour of the leaves. Garden plants which look like *R. sanguineum* Pursh but with larger yellowish-pinkish flowers may be *R. × gordonianum* Lemaire, and should be collected for verification.

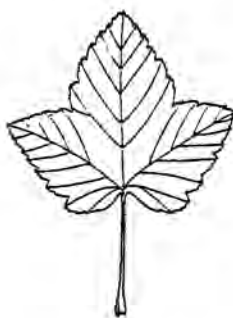
- 1 Plant with spines (sparsely spiny plants can be confused with *R. alpinum*)
- 1 Plant without spines

- 2 Glands on leaves and petioles amber (colour may be difficult to see)

***R. uva-crispa* L.**
(Subgenus *Ribes*) 2



***R. nigrum* L.**
Glands mostly sessile; leaves green, smelling of black currant



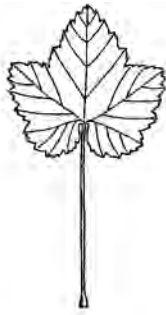
***R. sanguineum* Pursh**
Glands mostly short-stalked or sessile; leaves green, smelling of cats



***R. odoratum* Wendl. f.**
Glands mostly short-stalked or sessile; leaves glaucous

Plant Crib

2 Glands on leaves and petioles red



R. rubrum L.
Glands mostly short-stalked or sessile



R. spicatum Robson
Glands mostly short-stalked or sessile



R. alpinum L.
Glands mostly short-stalked

Authors J. R. Press, J. M. Mullin and M. J. Short, February 1988, minor updates 1998.

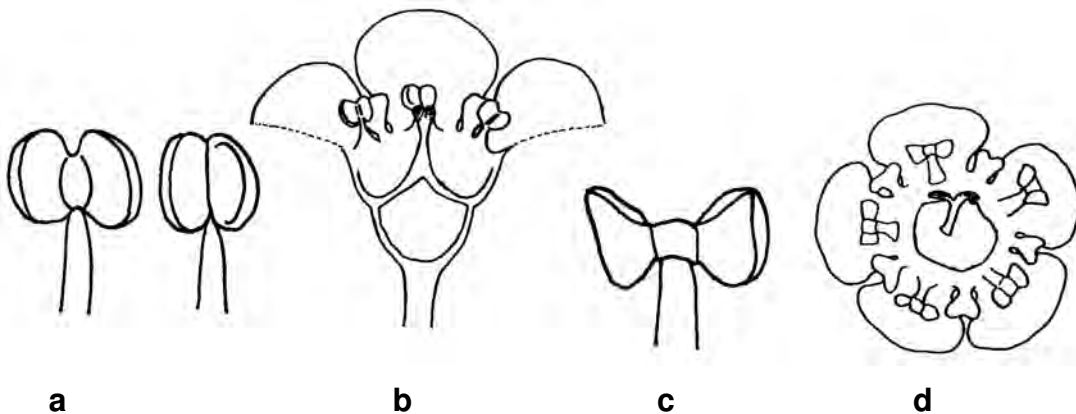
2. *Ribes spicatum* / *R. rubrum*

Although the leaves of the two segregates differ, it is unsafe without much experience, to separate them on leaf-shape alone. Even then, the full spectrum of leaves on any plant should be taken into account.

R. spicatum Robson: Inflorescence upright at first, spreading or arching in flower; receptacle perfectly circular (Fig. b), without a raised rim - in section deeply-concave; anther connective-tissue very narrow on inner side, broader on outer side (Fig. a). Scarce calcicole of woodlands and limestone pavement.

R. rubrum L.: Inflorescence drooping; receptacle obscurely pentagonal with a raised rim around the style - in section shallowly-concave (Fig. d); anther connective-tissue broad (Fig. c). Widespread.

The drawings in S. Ross-Craig *Drawings of British Plants* are good, except that the receptacle of *R. rubrum* is not always as clearly pentagonal as she drew. The anther connective character is diagnostic in fresh material.



Ribes spicatum (a) anthers (b) flower, *R. rubrum* (c) anther (d) flower.

Plant Crib

3. *Ribes uva-crispa*

Research is needed in Britain to see if the distribution of the cultivated forms of *R. uva-crispa* L. can be distinguished from native forms; please record habitats and likely source of introduction for the following two forms:

Possible native form: Berries with short, dense, patent non-glandular hairs.

Garden forms: Berries with mixture of long glandular hairs and short hairs, or glabrous.