



Letter to the Editor:

The last word on Lousyberry

I almost hesitate to write this now for fear of spoiling the fun which so many of your contributors have been having with the name "lousyberry", but when I first heard of it I checked

in the invaluable and delightful "*Englishman's Flora*" by Geoffrey Grigson and found the following:

"... With names from both goat and cat, dog and bitch, pegs and skewers and spindles, the beauties of EUONYMUS have had a raw deal. Add *louseberries* since the fruits were baked, powdered, and sprinkled on the hair of small boys to kill their nits and lice. (Evelyn, John: *Silva or a Discourse of Forest Trees*, 1664)"

In Surrey the fruits of the spindle tree are called DOG TOOTH BERRY, in Dorset, HORSE BUNS, in Gloucestershire and Warwickshire, LOUSEBERRIES and PINCUSHIONS and in Somerset, POPCORN.

So the culprit is the Spindle Tree or EUONYMUS EUROPAEUS and the explanation a little mundane, it would seem. Surely I am not the only person in Dover who loves and uses this marvellous book or does it take a foreigner to read *The Englishman's Flora* ?

PAMELA TAYLOR

'Some 30 years ago, when we lived in The Avenue, Temple Ewell, in much of our very wild garden Euonymus Europaeus grew abundantly. Our children referred to the bushes as 'spindle berry trees' or dogberry trees. Regretably I do not, and did not, possess a copy of the Englishman's Flora'

BUDGE ADAMS