

Castanopsis sieboldii - Growing Guide

Growing *Castanopsis Sieboldii*

Two extremely rare species of *Castanopsis* have grown at Caerhays for nearly a hundred years. *C. concolor* and *C. cuspidata* were both collected by George Forrest in Yunnan. They are slow growing small evergreen trees with densely packed leaves and one could easily pass them by here in the garden without beginning to notice them.

Castanopsis are allied to *Quercus* and *Castanea* and it is only when they produce fruit that you can appreciate what a distinct genus they represent. One might readily try to identify them as evergreen oaks until they grow large enough to fruit.

The fruits or nuts are entirely enclosed in a sweet chestnut-like capsule with prickles. As in some species of oak the enclosed nuts take two years to ripen. The male flowers are upright and, on our young plant of *C. concolor*, the fruits have so far failed to mature. *C. cuspidata* fruits only occasionally but we have occasionally managed to show it at autumn Garden Society events.



Castanopsis concolor



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Castanopsis grow well here in full shelter and with dappled shade. Full sun and exposure are far too great a risk with such rarities.