BURNCOOSE NURSERIES PART OF THE CAERHAYS ESTATE

Cautleya spicata - Growing Guide

Growing Cautleya Spicata

Cautleya have much in common with Hedychium and they could easily be mistaken as coming from this genus. As we have started to assemble a new collection of Hedychium at Caerhays in recent years Cautleya have been included.

Both genus are rhizomatous perennials that originate from the Himalayas in deep ravines or by water, both have two ranked lance shaped mid green leaves and both flower in early autumn which makes them interesting and unusual garden plants.

C. spicata (like Hedychium) grows best in a shaded herbaceous border or as a clump in a woodland garden in a damp spot or near water. The rhizomes must not be allowed to dry out and, although this plant is perfectly hardy, it is sensible to mulch the rhizomes over winter which will help maintain moisture levels over summer.

C. spicata produces stiff spikes of two lipped yellow flowers from reddish-green or maroon bracts. It is therefore the flower itself which is a bit different in structure to those of the Ginger lilies (Hedychium). The flower spike can be 2-3ft tall and the seeds from these can be sown in early spring taking care to keep slugs and snails away from what are, to them, very attractive leaves.

As with Hedychiums, Cautleya are most easily propagated by lifting and dividing the dense rhizomes during dormancy in early spring.



Cautleya spicata 'Robusta'



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