BURNCOOSE NURSERIES PART OF THE CAERHAYS ESTATE

Chimonanthus - Growing Guide

Growing Chimonanthus

Commonly known as ‘Wintersweet’

Chimonanthus is the counterpart in China of the North American genus calycanthus. The flowers of chimonanthus have five or six stamens and are yellow to white. Calycanthus has up to 30 stamens in each flower and the tepals are purplish brown.

C. praecox is a vigorous upright deciduous shrub growing to around 8-10ft with a similar spread. The fragrant flowers appear on our plant at Burncoose in January or February. They are pendant and sulphur-yellow with inner petals that have a hint of purple. The following leaves are rough to the touch on top and a dark lustrous green. They are pointed and about 2-5in long. We have never seen seed on our mature plant but they are stalked and gourd-like and about 1½in long.

These plants are perfectly hardy and need a position on a wall or near the house where their scent can be appreciated. They can also readily be grown as freestanding plants in the woodland garden.

Pruning is only really necessary if you want to train your plant onto a wall. Softwood cuttings should be taken in the summer.

C. nitens is an evergreen shrub with a spreading habit which needs cane support as a young plant. The leaves are 3-4in long and glabrous. The flowers are white. This is a relatively new and rare introduction which we have, so far, struggled to get going. The flowers are however heavily scented in winter and the popularity of this species may well increase.







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