

Colquhounia - Growing Guide

Growing Colquhounia Coccinea

This is a shrub with a lax, open or, perhaps, straggly habit which can grow up to 8 or 10ft. It is a good plant for a wall or for a shrub border and looks a bit buddleia-like in its leaf form. This is however an evergreen or semi evergreen plant with aromatic sage-green leaves. These are lance shaped and up to 8in long with a white wooly underside.

The flowers are produced on the current season's new growth from August on to October at the top of the new shoots. The erect flower head is made up of whorls of scarlet or orange red tubular funnel shaped flowers which are each about an inch long. Decidedly different from a buddleia when in flower!

Both the crushed leaves and the flowers have a pleasant apple-like scent which is another reason for growing this relatively unknown Himalayan native.

C. coccinea var *vestita*, which is the plant we offer, is generally considered to be hardier and more suitable for growing outdoors.

Colquhounia are generally frost hardy but may lose some of their leaves in a cold winter. It needs a hot, dry situation with shelter from cold winds but is not particularly fussed by having poorish soil conditions (like buddleia).

If there is frost damage the plant can be pruned back hard, possibly even to the base, with no ill effect. A root mulch is therefore a sensible precaution.

Softwood cuttings are easily rooted in mid summer with bottom heat.



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