

Corylopsis Growing Guide

Characteristics

All these species are deciduous shrubs and small trees from woodland and scrub locations in China, Taiwan and Japan. They are closely associated in botanical terms with hamamelis and parrotia and share many of the same characteristics in terms of leaf shape, seed capsules and hardness.

Corylopsis species all produce pendant racemes of 6 to 20 bell shaped fragrant greenish yellow or yellow flowers. The flowers appear well before the leaves emerge. Most flower in early March, or even earlier after a mild winter, and are a good follow on from hamamelis or hellebores before spring gets into full swing. They also look superb alongside early camellias and the first rhododendrons in a border or in the woodland garden.



Corylopsis on Rookery
Path



Corylopsis glabrescens



Corylopsis sinensis var
calvescens



Corylopsis spicata

Corylopsis, like hazels (*corylus*), are very easy to grow in acid soils and have few particular requirements.

They grow best in fertile, moist but well drained soil as, indeed, do most ericaceous woodland trees and shrubs.

In severe frosts the racemes of flowers may get damaged but this will not injure the plant in any other way.

The smaller growing *Corylopsis pauciflora* does occasionally get some damage to its new growth in late frosts but soon grows through the problem.

Corylopsis prefer dappled shade or sun for only part of the day rather than exposure to full sun in the open where some leaf scorching can occur in dry conditions. *C. pauciflora* is again rather susceptible to this.

Propagation



Corylopsis are difficult to grow from cuttings. Growing from seed is much easier.

Seed capsules are often visible by mid summer and are ripe enough to collect in late September or October. The black seeds can then be extracted from the capsules and sown immediately in containers or in an open cold frame in a mixture of peat and sand.

Germination should occur the following spring.

We have a detailed [article on collecting, storing and growing seeds](#) .

Pests And Diseases

There are none to worry about with corylopsis which are generally entirely trouble free.

Our Best Selection

Our selection of the best corylopsis varieties to grow:



Corylopsis pauciflora
this is a dwarf shrub spreading to 4-6ft in height and width with slender branches and masses of primroses yellow flowers



Corylopsis sinensis willmottiae
this species grows to 10-12ft in height and flowers in April with large drooping racemes of primrose yellow flowers.



Corylopsis sinensis 'Spring Purple'
Good autumn colour, the new growth is an attractive plum colour.



Corylopsis sinensis

'Spring Purple'

This takes a few years to
become evident and is
best in maturity.

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