BURNCOOSE NURSERIES PART OF THE CAERHAYS ESTATE

Emmenopterys Growing Guide

Emmenopterys Growing Information

Two species of Chinese emmenopterys grow at Caerhays; E. henryi and E. wilsonii. They are both UK Record Trees of around 60ft in height but, sadly, they have never yet chosen to flower in our Cornish climate. Our original plants arrived as a Wilson collection in 1907 and, more recently, tissue culture grown plants from Kew have grown exponentially at Caerhays and Burncoose to around 25ft. Still no flowers here either!

E. henryi was described by Wilson as ‘one of the most strikingly beautiful trees of Chinese forests’. It first flowered in Europe in Italy in 1971. Since then the tree has flowered at Wakehurst and regularly in a Belgian arboretum. The flowers are white, cascading and wisteria-like. They appear in terminal panicles which are rounded or pyramidical and can be 10in wide and 6-8in high. Woodland gardeners would and should drive hundreds of miles to see this tree flowering.

It would seem colder winters and hotter summers may be necessary to induce flowering. Exactly what climate change is supposed to have in store for us! However the erect habit, huge elliptic-ovate leaves and reddish new growth make this an attractive ornamental tree to grow even without any flowers. It is perfectly hardy, needs full sun, and some wind protection for its large leaves. We have found it impossible from cuttings.



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