

## Illicium Growing Guide

### Growing Illicium

Commonly known as 'Anise'

These evergreen plants are little known in cultivation but those who have seen their extraordinary flowers should certainly be tempted to try something new in the shrub border or woodland garden. They are related to the magnolia family and to drimys.

All illicium have flowers which are composed of numerous tepals or petals of one colour. The colour range between the species is from greenish-yellow to red or red-purple.

*I. anisatum* (Japanese Anise) is the best known of the species and comes from Japan and China. It grows into a small tree of around 15-20ft in height and its flowers emerge with us in March or even earlier after a mild winter. The flowers are around an inch across in profusion from top to bottom of the tree or shrub. They are very fragrant and yellowish at first fading to more of a creamy colour.



*Illicium anisatum*



*Illicium anisatum*



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*Illicium anisatum*

*Illicium* grow well in conditions which rhododendrons enjoy although they will tolerate a little lime. Need one therefore say any more about how to grow them successfully!

Excitingly for gardeners there are lots of new species starting to be grown in the UK from wild collected seed material from Vietnam and southern China. Some Cornish gardens, such as Tregrehan, are already growing these successfully but their wider hardiness has not yet been fully established.

We are starting to offer *I. simonsii*, *I. oligodon* and *I. henryi* in our catalogue in limited numbers. *I. simonsii* may well become much more widely grown in the next decade. Although variable in habit and flower size it is also a very attractive large shrub or small tree.

Beyond that there are other, possibly more tender, species of *illicium* which we are now experimenting with in the garden for the first time.



*Illicium griffithii*



*Illicium griffithii*



*Illicium majus*



*Illicium majus*



*Illicium lanceolatum*



*Illicium lanceolatum*



*Illicium lanceolatum*



*Illicium yunnanense*



*Illicium floribundum*



*Illicium floridanum*



*Illicium henryi*



*Illicium henryi*

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**Burncoose Nurseries: Gwennap, Redruth, Cornwall TR16 6BJ**

Telephone: +44 (0) 1209 860316 Fax: +44 (0) 1209 860011 Email: [info@burncoose.co.uk](mailto:info@burncoose.co.uk)

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