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Stachyurus - Growing Guide

Growing Stachyurus

Traditionally the deciduous S. praecox and S. chinensis have been much admired and widely grown in UK gardens for their floriferousness and unusual shaped flowers. Today we are fortunate to have other more newly introduced evergreen species of stachyurus to try (S. sigeyosii, S. yunnanensis). These however seem to enjoy much the same situation and positioning on the garden as their popular forerunners.

Deciduous and evergreen stachyurus form their spring flowers in the autumn and the long purplish-brown racemes are clearly visible when the leaves fall on the deciduous varieties. S. praecox has stiff drooping racemes of 2-3in long bell shaped pale yellow flowers in March. The shrub grows to 6-8ft but has a similar spread and is best grown on a bank where the profusion of flower racemes hang onto the path. S. chinensis flowers a week or two later with smaller racemes of larger yellow flowers. Both species set long tassels of greenish seeds in profusion. These are often ripe by mid September and can be collected and sown straight away. The ultimate height of S. chinensis is 8-10ft with us. This plant does not overflower or set quite as much seed and, with us, has, consequently, a rather longer life span than S. praecox. Our oldest shrub of S. praecox is looking as though it will pass out from over exertion after 25 years.

The deciduous (and, so far, the evergreen) stachyurus are totally hardy. They like a light, moist well drained soil and are very akin to corylopsis in this regard. Full sun or partial shade is fine. The form of S. praecox with variegated leaves called ‘Magpie’ is best grown in shade. S. himalaicus, with its pinkish or purplish flowers, grows well at Rosemoor with an upright habit beside a stream.

The evergreen stachyurus are most easily rooted from semi ripe new growth in mid summer. The deciduous varieties should be taken a little earlier as heeled side shoots. Seeds are easier!



Stachyrus lonicifolius



Stachyrus salicifolius



Stachyrus chinensis



Stachyrus chinensis



Stachyrus praecox



Stachyrus praecox



Stachyrus praecox



Stachyrus praecox



Stachyrus himalaicus



Stachyrus rubriflorus



Stachyrus rubriflorus



Stachyrus rubriflorus



Stachyrus rubriflorus



Stachyrus sigeyosii

Charles Williams discussing stachyurus chinensis, yunnanensis, lancifolius and praecox.

View this video on Youtube here https://www.youtube.com/Vk-ucmhqxm0

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