

Aextoxicom - Growing Guide

Growing Aextoxicom Punctatum

Olivillo

This is another evergreen tree from Chile and Argentina which grows well with us near to *Peumus boldus*. Like the *Peumus* it started out as a dense leaved, upright shrub which took 10 to 12 years to start to develop into a tree in its own right.

The leaves are leathery and scaly and resemble those of an *Eleagnus*. They are dark green on top and lighter green below but also covered in rusty red coloured scales. The new growth is a very attractive bronzy colour.

The flowerheads form with us in the autumn and take an age to actually come out after Christmas. The flowers appear in hanging racemes of small creamy-yellowish male and female flowers together. Female flowers then produce small purple to black olive like fruits and hence the common name of this tree.

This species was first introduced to the UK by Harold Comber in the 1920s. It thrives with us in dappled shade in a moist situation. It is developing into a handsome and garden worthy flowering tree which has not turned a hair in the cold east winds of March 2018 or February 2021.

We propagate this plant from late autumn hardwood cuttings as we have yet to see any olive-like fruits on our trees.

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