

Aloysia citrodora - Growing Guide

Growing Aloysia Citroedora

Lemon scented verbenas, Lemon verbenas

This is another genus whose name has been changed over the years. Older staff members on the nursery still call it Lippia citriodora or Aloysia triphylla.

A. citrodora comes from Chile and is a bushy upright deciduous shrub which might grow to 6ft or so in the very mildest parts of the country. It grows best in poor but well drained soils in full sun. In colder parts of the country it is best grown in shelter up against a warm wall which it can be trained up.

A. citrodora is grown for its lemon scented foliage rather than its flowers although these can be attractive in late August when long 5in panicles of tiny white or pale lilac flowers emerge. The foliage can be used for culinary purposes or the dried leaves used in potpourri. When dried the leaf scent becomes more intense. Leaves should be picked after flowering for this purpose.

It is perhaps safer in frosty areas to consider this a greenhouse plant where its lance shaped bright green leaves can be touched and the scent enjoyed. Inside or out A. citrodora will benefit from a hard prune over winter to reduce the size of the plant by a half or more. This will encourage more vigorous new growth and better flowering. Older plants in the garden which remain unpruned can soon get straggly and misshapen. They are also prone to dieback or worse in a cold winter. Outdoors an autumn mulch will help protect the roots.



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