

Amomyrtus luma - Care Guide

Growing Amomyrtus Luma

(Myrtus lechleriana)

You can read more about the highly confusing and fairly recent reclassification of myrtus or myrtles into Luma, Ugni and Amomyrtus in other care articles. Anyway taxonomists and botanists have, for the moment at least, decided that what we have all known as Myrtus lechleriana is now to be called Amomyrtus luma.

Amomyrtus luma is an upright bushy shrub which, with us, grows into a small multi stemmed tree of 30ft or more in height. The dark green leaves are particularly aromatic as are the flowers. One of the unusual things about this plant is that some years it can be in full flower in March with its drooping clusters of five petalled creamy-white flowers in profusion. In other years it only performs in May and has occasionally been displayed then on our Chelsea Flower Show exhibits.

It is a perfectly hardy shrub or small tree which, like other myrtles, self-seeds itself in profusion all around the main trunked plant. The berries are scented too and appear red at first, turning black when ripe. In the wild in Chile it grows in woodland margins.

The reason for separating out A. luma from other members of the myrtle family is that its flowers have five rather than four petals and its fruits contain four to six separate woody seeds.

If you wish to join me in continuing to call this exceptional plant Myrtus lechleriana you will find no contradiction from us.



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