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Bischofia polycarpa - Care Guide

Caring For Bischofia Polycarpa

This is an exciting introduction of a new genus of trees to the Burncoose website which are, as yet, virtually unknown in the UK. We have not managed to plant one out in the gardens here but that is a target for next spring. Bischofia polycarpa is an endemic tree to China but, until very recently, it had only been offered for sale by a very few nurseries in the USA. The trees are said to be hardy in a few US arboretums but may suffer in extremely cold winters. This is all for us now to try out in the UK.

The deciduous B. polycarpa has reddish-brown bark in maturity peeling longitudinally. Its key feature is however its large and handsome red veined trifoliate leaves on long red stalks. The terminal leaflet is larger than the other two. The inflorescences of many small flowers are either male or female on separate trees. The flowers have no sepals or petals so are of little interest in comparison to the leaves.

In the wild this tree grows as a relatively low altitude forest tree and, in China, is used as a street tree. Time will tell if this becomes a popular tree for UK woodland gardeners but it is always exciting to try something as rare as this yourself!

Bischofia polycarpa

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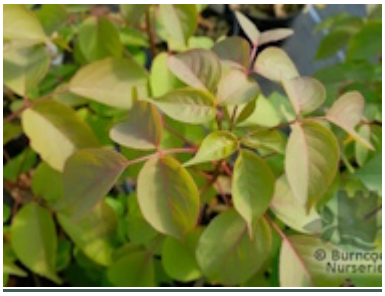

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