

Campylotropis - Growing Guide

Growing Campylotropis

When I first located this plant in the nursery I had to rush for the reference books to find out what it was! Campylotropis are shrubby plants native to China and the Korean peninsula. *C. macrocarpa* is a medium sized upright or spreading shrub growing up to 4-5ft in height which does best in full sun in a warm, sheltered location.

Campylotropis are close relatives to lespedeza, the bush clover, and produce similarly spectacular late season displays of pea flowers.

The leaves are trifoliate with oblong or obovate leaflets. The terminal leaflet is often the largest. The new growth has a delicate bronzy hue which contrasts nicely with the rest of its paler slightly bluish-green mature foliage.

Flowers appear in late August or September in large quantities on 3in terminal racemes. The individual pea flowers are pale magenta to violet purple with a white base. The weight of the flowers causes the individual branches to bend over so that the shrub develops a graceful weeping habit. Bees are strongly attracted to the flowers.

This is a perfectly hardy plant in all but the coldest areas of the country but it is also a little known rarity in gardens. It won the first prize as a new introduction at the Courson show in France in 2000.

Autumn sees rich yellow leaf colours. A hard pruning of established and mature plants in the spring will encourage more new growth and flower in the subsequent year. The plant is usually late into growth in the spring.

Propagation is easiest from softwood cuttings taken from the new growth tips in summer.



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