

Cleyera - Growing Guide

Growing Cleyera Japonica 'Fortunei'

These are slow growing evergreen shrubs with a dense and rounded habit. If you like variegated evergreen shrubs as providing colour and contrast in a woodland garden this may be one for you. We grow it just below a large clump of mature camellias with dark green foliage where it catches the eye in the summer when there is no flower on the camellias.

Cleyera japonica 'Fortunei' originates from Japan and was introduced to the UK by Robert Fortune in 1861. It has been referred to as 'Tricolor' or 'Variegata' but the correct name of this form is 'Fortunei'.

The shining green leaves are marbled grey and have a cream margin that is flushed deep rose-red when young. After a cold winter you get more reddish leaf colour.

One may not think of Cleyera fortunei as being an attractive flowering shrub but, in midsummer, the bees give it away. It has huge numbers of very fragrant small white flowers but you have to look closely to appreciate the quantity of bloom slightly hidden within the foliage.

Our mature plant is 25 years old and now about 6-8ft tall with a spread of probably double this.

Propagation, as with so many evergreens of this sort, is from autumn cuttings.



Camellia japonica 'Fortunei'



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