

Mallotus - Growing Guide

Growing Mallotus Japonicus

I first saw this growing as a small (male) tree of around 15-20ft in height at the Ventnor Botanic Garden in the Isle of Wight and was impressed by its attractive pinkish new growth and large pyramidical panicles of creamy flowers on reddish stems. The leaves too were handsome and roundish.

Ventnor gardens are on an upraised beach facing due south and this tree is beside a hot, dry, but very sheltered terrace and wall. Its next door neighbour is the equally tender *Firmania simplex*. The Ventnor tree originated from Taiwan (where its bark is highly valued) and we decided to risk trying to grow a couple of these at Caerhays. Once given protection from nibbling roe deer these deciduous trees have been developing well although we have yet to see any flowers to determine if we have male or female plants.

In view of this success with *M. japonicus* we have introduced seed grown plants to our website in small numbers. It may be that this tree is best grown in a large pot in a glasshouse until it has a developed woody main stem and only then risk planting it out in a warm sheltered and frost free location. It gets hot and well drained at Ventnor but does well at the top of the garden here at Caerhays in sun for only part of the day. Our soil is far less free draining.

[Loads of Isle of Wight pictures and at Caerhays to be added]



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