

Melaleuca - Growing Guide

Caring For Melaleuca

Paperbark

This is a genus of half-hardy or frost tender evergreen shrubs which are allied to callistemon and have similar bottlebrush flowers. Like callistemon they are mainly natives to Australia and have small cylindrical leathery leaves.

While these may be risky plants to grow outside you can get away with growing them in Cornwall in very hot, sun baked locations where they are also completely sheltered from cold winds. At Ventnor Botanic Garden in the Isle of Wight many species grow well under a plantation of tender eucalyptus in a narrow, sheltered dell. Here some species have grown to 8-10ft in height and produce an array of different coloured bottlebrush flowers.

Despite their tenderness melaleuca do make rewarding greenhouse or conservatory plants. They do not grow into larger shrubs that quickly and can readily be pruned into shape as needed. Ideally pruning should take place just after flowering. Melaleuca root easily from softwood cuttings.

From time to time the following species will be available on the Burncoose website:

M. armillaris, the bracelet honey myrtle, is a spreading shrub with cylinders of white flowers in summer.

M. squarrosa, the scented paperbark, is a much more erect and rigid shrub with pointed leaves and oblong spikes of pale yellow flowers.

M. gibbosa is a small wiry shrub with light pink-purple short dense bottlebrush flowers during summer.

Still needs images

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