BURNCOOSE NURSERIES PART OF THE CAERHAYS ESTATE

Sarcococca - Growing Guide

Growing Sarcococca

Commonly known as ‘Sweet Box’ or ‘Christmas Box’

If you have trouble thinking of what plants to grow in shaded spots then these plants are from a genus that you should try.

There are a dozen or more species of these evergreen plants which come from moist, shady places in the forests and thickets of China. They are prized for their attractive foliage, very fragrant out of season (December to February) white or greenish-white flowers and berry like fruits which are red, purple, black or blue-black when ripe.

Sarcococca species which are dwarf and have spreading rhizomatous growth (S. hookeriana and varieties) make ideal ground cover while the taller growing forms, and especially S. saligna, can be grown as a lowish hedge. The clump forming species, including the relatively newly introduced S. wallichii, S. confusa and S. ruscifolia, can brighten up dull corners of the garden where little else will thrive.

Most species of Sarcococca are fully frost hardy, S. saligna a little less so, and all are tolerant of neglect and dry shady conditions.

There is no need to prune Sarcococca at all. Providing the soil remains a little moist, and they have shelter from cold winds, they will grow almost anywhere including full sun if required.

Slugs and snails dislike Sarcococca so they are very happy grown against an old wall where other plants might well be devoured.

Propagation is best from semi-ripe summer cuttings. Those forms which sucker allow gardeners to readily chop off and list some new growths with root to plant elsewhere in late autumn. Seeds are best sown in containers

in autumn or spring if you can get there before the birds and mice take them.

Sarcococca hookeriana

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Sarcococca hookeriana

Sarcococca var dignya

Sarcococca var dignya

Sarcococca saligna

Sarcococca orientalis

Sarcococca wallichii

Sarcococca wallichii

0:00 - S. hookeriana var digyna
1:50 - S. wallichii
2:44 - S. orientalis
3:50 - S. ruscifolia
5:19 - S. saligna

View this video on Youtube here https://www.youtube.com/n5048OOr7l8

Sarcococca Confusa - Video Tip

View this video on Youtube here https://www.youtube.com/M8SQ9fy8MYY?si=EzJSP5R7dsHU5Ckj

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