

Stewartia - Growing Guide

Characteristics

This genus of evergreen and deciduous trees from the USA, China and Japan is related to Camellia. Stewartia flowers have great merit in woodland gardens because their white, camellia-like blooms appear in June, July and August when little else is out.

Most species of stewartias also have attractive peeling bark which provides colour and interest right through the year. The autumn colours on *S. rostrata* (near black) and *S. monodelpha* (red-brown) particularly are another useful attribute.

Stewartias are relatively unknown in UK gardens compared to other summer flowering trees such as eucryphia. However they well deserve to be more widely grown and appreciated and are not difficult small trees to grow.



Stewartia x henryae



Stewartia henryana



Stewartia henryana



Stewartia henryana



Stewartia malecodendron



Stewartia malecodendron



Stewartia monodelpha



Stewartia monodelpha



Stewartia monodelpha



Stewartia pteropetiolata

Stewartias enjoy moist but well drained soils which are moderately fertile and humus rich.

Neutral to acid soil is required and full sun or dappled shade is fine with some shelter from strong winds.

In smaller gardens they are, perhaps, an interesting alternative as a smaller growing tree to acers or cherries.

Stewartias dislike being transplanted and require no pruning.

There are no specific pests and diseases and stewartias are trouble free. *S. pteropetiolata*, which is evergreen, is the only tenderish species.



Stewartia serrata



Stewartia serrata



Stewartia serrata



Stewartia serrata



Stewartia sinensis



Stewartia sinensis



Stewartia sinensis



Stewartia sinensis

Stewartias produce woody ovoid capsules of seeds each of which has five seed chambers containing up to four seeds.

These can be readily removed by hand from their capsules when ripe in the autumn. They can then be sown immediately in pots or containers and overwintered in a cold frame. They will germinate readily in the following spring.

Stewartias can be grown from softwood new growth cuttings in mid summer. As with many small trees, rooting the cuttings is one thing but successfully overwintering them quite another. Alternatively, cuttings can

be tried from ripened wood in late summer and inserted directly in sandy soil under a cloche or in a cold frame.

Seeds are easier!

See our detailed [article on collecting, storing and planting seeds](#) .

Our Best Two To Grow

Our choice of the two best stewartia species to grow:

Stewartia pseudocamellia – attractive peeling pink to green and red-brown to grey bark. Rose-like cup shaped white flowers.



Stewartia pseudocamellia



Stewartia pseudocamellia



Stewartia pseudocamellia



Stewartia pseudocamellia



Stewartia pseudocamellia



Stewartia pseudocamellia



Stewartia rostrata



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Stewartia rostrata

View this video on Youtube here <https://www.youtube.com/kSRpEDpU3Ws>

Stewartia In Autumn - Video Tip

View this video on Youtube here <https://www.youtube.com/hOh38IyBpuo>

Further Reading

Stewartia at Caerhays - in depth study of sinensis, pteropetiolata and pseudocamellia, written by Charles Williams and published in the Cornwall Garden Society Yearbook 2019.

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