

Calodendron capense – Cape Chestnut

This is a very ornamental tree, suitable for use as a shade or specimen tree in gardens and parks, also as a street tree. It does best in deep fertile, well-composted soil with plenty of moisture, particularly during spring and summer, and requires a warm sunny position. To develop and maintain its shapely canopy, it requires protection from strong, sustained winds.

Young plants require protection from frost, but established plants can take temperatures to -7°C.

Note that when grown in bitterly cold areas, it is likely not to flower very well.

Propagation

By seed or cuttings.

Seed can be sown as soon as it drops in late Summer to Autumn or kept refrigerated and sown the following spring or summer. Sow in deep trays in well-drained potting media.

Germination should take 10-40 days and if growing in colder climates, bottom heat should be used.

This tree has a relatively long juvenile phase and will rarely flower until it is 7 or 8 years old.

Young trees transplant easily and under ideal conditions can grow nearly 1 m in a year.

