

Billardiera species

Billardiera bicolor

Billardiera longifolia

Billardiera scandens

Billardiera is a small genus of about 25 species, mainly light climbers or small shrubs. All occur only in Australia with the majority being found in Western Australia. The genus includes species formerly included in the genera Marianthus and Rhytidosporum.

This is a hardy plant for a range of soils and climates. It will tolerate full to semi shade. It is useful for planting among other shrubs. It can also be trained on a trellis. The flowers attract honey-eating birds.

Propagation

Propagation from seed was considered unreliable until the advent of smoke pre-treatment for many species. The species can be propagated reasonably easily from cuttings using firm, current season's growth.

WHEN TO SOW – In warm areas at any time. In colder areas after danger of frost has passed.

CULTIVATION – This plant grows as a twining climber can be planted in position in the garden, on a trellis or used as a hanging basket feature.

Pre-germination – The strike rate of seed is increased using smoke treatment. The simplest method of this treatment is to place a small pile (several inches) of dry leaves on the surface of your germinating mixture, set this alight and allow it to burn down. Remove any surface detritus and then lightly scuff the surface and proceed to sow your seed as normal. Use a pottery or other heat resistant container for smoking. Sow in any good propagation mix.

Plant out when seedlings have passed their second leaf stage and are large enough to handle.

WHERE TO GROW – In a well-drained position with full sun. Takes most soil types.