

Backhousia species

Despite its natural range being rather limited, this tree grows happily in cooler climates and is grown in throughout the eastern states as far south as Victoria. It prefers a warm sheltered spot but tolerates full sun or part shade. Although it likes to be kept well watered, it does prefer a well-drained soil. Being a rainforest species, the soil pH should be slightly acidic, and, like many other rainforest plants, can perform well indoors as a slow-growing house plant while young. It is relatively free of pests and diseases.

It is hardy once established. Some shade and frost protection is advised when young. It prefers acid to neutral organic soil (either light or heavy textured) but will tolerate a wide range of soil conditions.

Propagate in a good medium range propagation mixture. Crush the florets lightly and soak in warm water for several hours. Sow in a good quality seed raising mix. Seed should only be lightly covered.

Sow - surface sow in spring or autumn. Sow seed to a depth of 5 mm. Optimum temperature for germination is 22 to 25°C. Keep the medium lightly moist until germination takes place.

When they are large enough to handle, prick the seedlings out into individual pots and grow them on for at least their first winter.

Plant them out into their permanent positions in late spring or early summer, after the last expected frosts.

The soil for planting should be rich, moist, well mulched and well composted.