

Brachysema celsanum – The Swan River Pea

The Swan River Pea is a very attractive but hard to get member of the pea family. A shrub to about 1.5m tall and 3m in width it has dark green foliage to about 10cm that is silver underneath. It has an attractive arching habit that show off the showy scarlet pea flowers. This is an adaptable species that can be used against a fence or trellis as a climber or as a cascading feature on a slope or bank or in a tub or hanging basket and flowers while very young.

It is at home in most light well-drained soils with poor to average nutrients and in coastal and salt spray environments in part shade to full sun. It is fast-growing, frost tolerant, bird attracting and can withstand periods of both dry and soggy soil. It responds well to shaping and pruning. All in all an unusual and versatile range of attributes.

Propagation

Propagation is easy from seed following pre-treatment to break the physical dormancy provided by the impervious seed coat. Pre-treatment can be carried out by abrasion or by the use of boiling water. The seed retains viability for many years. Cuttings strike well using firm, current season's growth.