

Plant Name: Fuchsia excorticata (F)

Common Name: Tree Fuchsia

Plant Type: Shrub

Colour: metallic crimson-purple

Height: 5m

Flowering Time: Flowers from May to Jun



Species Data (applies to all plants in this Plant Species)

No Species data defined for this species

Plant Data (applies to THIS plant only)

Native to New Zealand and also known as the Kotukutuku, this is an attractive, fast-growing shrub or small tree. Has very ornamental, thin, red, papery bark that peels easily to reveal a smooth, satiny, greenish inner layer. The flowers are a fascinating, vaguely metallic crimson-purple colour and hang directly from the branches in spring. They produce a most unusual blue pollen and are followed by purple, edible berries called Konini, which have an unusual flavour and can be eaten raw or cooked in pies etc. An unusual addition to your garden which is sure to attract attention!

- Hardy Shrub - but protect when young and in very cold regions will need protection in a sheltered position
- Flowers: Spring
- Height: 5m
- Position: Semi-shade

Physical Characteristics

A deciduous Shrub.

It is in flower from May to June. The flowers are hermaphrodite (have both male and female organs) and are pollinated by Insects. It is noted for attracting wildlife.

The plant prefers light (sandy), medium (loamy) and heavy (clay) soils and requires well-drained soil. The plant prefers acid, neutral and basic (alkaline) soils. It can grow in semi-shade (light woodland) or no shade. It requires moist soil. The plant can tolerate strong winds but not maritime exposure.

Habitats

Woodland Garden; Sunny Edge; Dappled Shade; Shady Edge;

Edible Uses

Edible Parts: Fruit; Sap.

Fruit - raw or cooked in pies, tarts, cakes, desserts etc. Juicy. A juicy

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berry, it is sweet but astringent. A unique flavour, they are best combined with potato flour or corn starch in order to temper the slight astringency. Sap - sweet. Obtained by cutting a length of branch and sucking out the sap, it is not freely produced however.

Medicinal Uses

Plants For A Future can not take any responsibility for any adverse effects from the use of plants. Always seek advice from a professional before using a plant medicinally.

Other Uses

Cosmetic; Dye; Ink; Wood.

A purple dye is obtained from the plant (the part is not specified, though it is likely to be the pollen). It makes a good ink. The pollen is bright blue and was used by the Maoris as a face powder. Wood - very strong and durable with an attractive grain, but hard to work. Used for making small items.

Cultivation details

Succeeds in any fertile well-drained circum-neutral soil, preferring one that is rich in humus. Prefers semi-shade and a sheltered position. Does well in woodland conditions. This species is only hardy in the mildest parts of Britain, tolerating temperatures down to about -10°C when fully dormant. The young growth in spring, even on mature plants, is frost-tender and so it is best to grow the plants in a position sheltered from the early morning sun. It grows well outdoors in Cornwall and along the west coast of Scotland. Plants seem to be immune to the predations of rabbits. A good bee plant. A very unusual plant in that its pollen is bright blue.

Propagation

Seed - best sown as soon as it is ripe though it can also be sown in the spring. Surface sow the seed in pots in a warm greenhouse and do not allow the compost to dry out. Germination should take place in less than 6 weeks. Prick out the seedlings into individual pots when they are large enough to handle, and grow them on in the greenhouse for at least their first winter. Plant out in late spring or early summer, after the last expected frosts. Inter-nodal cuttings of greenwood, 5 - 8cm long, May/June in a frame. Quick and easy, a high percentage take. Overwinter in the greenhouse for the first year and plant out after the last expected frosts. Inter-nodal cuttings of half-ripe wood, July/August in a frame. Very quick and easy, treat as greenwood cuttings above. Cuttings usually succeed at any time during the growing season.