Variegated New Zealand Christmas Tree

Metrosideros excelsa 'Variegata'

Height: 25 feet

Spread: 25 feet

Sunlight:

Hardiness Zone: 9

Other Names: Pohutukawa

Description:

A vigorous, stout trunked ornamental tree that may also be maintained as a shrub or hedge; dark green leaves are variegated with yellow to white edges; bright red bottlebrush flowers in winter create a dazzling display; very frost sensitive

Ornamental Features

Variegated New Zealand Christmas Tree features showy red frilly flowers at the ends of the branches from late fall to late winter, which emerge from distinctive white flower buds. It has attractive dark green foliage edged in creamy white with hints of yellow which emerges chartreuse in spring. The oval leaves are highly ornamental and remain dark green throughout the winter.

Landscape Attributes

Variegated New Zealand Christmas Tree is a multi-stemmed evergreen tree with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its average texture blends into the landscape, but can be balanced by one or two finer or coarser trees or shrubs for an effective composition.

This is a relatively low maintenance tree, and should only be pruned after flowering to avoid removing any of the current season's flowers. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Variegated New Zealand Christmas Tree is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Shade
- Hedges/Screening
- General Garden Use



Variegated New Zealand Christmas Tree foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



Variegated New Zealand Christmas Tree
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

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Planting & Growing

Variegated New Zealand Christmas Tree will grow to be about 25 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 25 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 2 feet from the ground, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 40 years or more.

This tree should only be grown in full sunlight. It does best in average to evenly moist conditions, but will not tolerate standing water. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. It is particular about its soil conditions, with a strong preference for rich, acidic soils, and is able to handle environmental salt. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution, and will benefit from being planted in a relatively sheltered location. This is a selected variety of a species not originally from North America.