Variegated Australian Pinwheel

Tabernaemontana australis 'Variegata'



Variegated Australian Pinwheel foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 5 feet

Spread: 5 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 10

Other Names: Crepe Jasmine

Description:

This rare variety features stunning, deep green leaves, variegated in white and gray-green; contrasting dainty white flowers appear year-round but primarily in spring; fruit appears in pairs and ripens bright red; can be grown indoors in colder climates

Ornamental Features

Variegated Australian Pinwheel features dainty clusters of fragrant white star-shaped flowers at the ends of the branches from early to late spring. It has attractive white-variegated dark green foliage with hints of grayish green. The glossy oval leaves are highly ornamental and remain dark green throughout the winter. It produces orange capsules from mid summer to late fall, which fade to red over time. The rough gray bark is extremely showy and adds significant winter interest.

Landscape Attributes

Variegated Australian Pinwheel is a dense multi-stemmed evergreen shrub with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its relatively coarse texture can be used to stand it apart from other landscape plants with finer foliage.

This is a relatively low maintenance shrub, and should only be pruned after flowering to avoid removing any of the current season's flowers. It is a good choice for attracting butterflies to your yard. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Variegated Australian Pinwheel is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Mass Planting
- Hedges/Screening
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Variegated Australian Pinwheel will grow to be about 5 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 5 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 1 foot 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 60 years or more.

This shrub does best in full sun to partial shade. 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. This plant should be periodically fertilized throughout the active growing season with a specially-formulated acidic fertilizer. It is very fussy about its soil conditions and must have rich, acidic soils to ensure success, and is subject to chlorosis (yellowing) of the foliage in alkaline soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone in winter to protect it in exposed locations or colder microclimates. This is a selected variety of a species not originally from North America, and parts of it are known to be toxic to humans and animals, so care should be exercised in planting it around children and pets.

Variegated Australian Pinwheel makes a fine choice for the outdoor landscape, but it is also well-suited for use in outdoor pots and containers. With its upright habit of growth, it is best suited for use as a 'thriller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the center of the pot, surrounded by smaller plants and those that spill over the edges. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when grown in a container, it may not perform exactly as indicated on the tag - this is to be expected. Also note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.