



### Camellia Sasanquas Are Budding Up Now!

It's getting to that wonderful time of the year again when Camellia Sasanquas and their related cultivars begin to color up our suburbs and take over where Oleanders and Crepe Myrtles are finishing up. We are so lucky to be able to have a parade of background color in our gardens throughout the year. Sasanquas, as they are commonly called are the autumn/winter flowering members of the Camellia family and precede the Camellia Japonicas which follow on in winter through to spring – it's that parade of color thing again!

Buds are fattening up and soon we will have that froth of color that will last for many weeks. The flowers range from deep cerise through to almost pure white with many gorgeous shades of pink in between. Many varieties have very prominent yellow stamens that are a real feature of the flower. You will find that the 'cheeky minah' birds love the nectar in these stamens.

Camellia Sasanquas have so many uses in and around the garden – they are incredibly versatile. Apart from the obvious use as a thick glossy green hedge that can be allowed to 'roam free' or be trimmed to a neat angular shape, here are some other ideas:

- Espalier these on to a frame or fence. This involves tying the branches back against a fence to fan out the plant. Select varieties that have a spreading/arching habit
- You can practice your topiary skills by selecting a Sasanqua with a straight stem and forming a ball shape head or allowing the top to be free form. These can be grown in a large pot.
- If you are looking for a small tree or have a Sasanqua in the garden that can be trimmed in such a way, you can trim the lower branches off to encourage a trunk and then a small canopy to develop. This can be most effective and a pretty element to your garden.
- Smaller growing varieties are perfect for pots – just ensure that they receive adequate water and fertilizer.

Camellia Sasanquas are without a doubt amongst the hardiest of all the garden plants available. Australia is recognised as being a leader in the global horticultural industry for the breeding and development of new cultivars that will tolerate the extreme weather conditions experienced 'down under.'

Grow your Camellia Sasanquas in well drained and richly composted soil. Semi-shade to almost full sun is best. Once established, they are TOUGH and very low maintenance.

Regular deep watering and a feed in spring and summer is all they need. Garden pests and diseases are almost non-existent.

You can't go wrong with a Camellia Sasanqua!

**Life's a garden – dig it!**