Allamanda cathartica ‘Cherries Jubilee’

Edward F. Gilman

Introduction

This evergreen, spreading and climbing vine is covered with vivid flowers in the warm months (Fig. 1). Lavender-red, trumpet shaped flowers explode into bloom during the warm months and cover the vine in vibrant color. The spiny, yellow-green fruit follows and can be seen on the plant simultaneously with the spectacular blooms.

General Information

Scientific name: Allamanda cathartica ‘Cherries Jubilee’
Pronunciation: al-luh-MAN-duh kath-AR-tick-uh
Common name(s): ‘Cherries Jubilee’ Allamanda
Family: Apocynaceae
Plant type: ground cover
USDA hardiness zones: 9B through 11 (Fig. 2)
Planting month for zone 9: year round
Planting month for zone 10 and 11: year round
Origin: not native to North America
Uses: container or above-ground planter; ground cover; cascading down a wall; hanging basket
Availability: generally available in many areas within its hardiness range

Description

Height: depends upon supporting structure
Spread: depends upon supporting structure
Plant habit: spreading
Plant density: moderate
Growth rate: fast

Texture: coarse

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: whorled
Leaf type: simple
Leaf margin: entire
Leaf shape: oblong

Figure 1. ‘Cherries Jubilee’ Allamanda.

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Leaf venation: pinnate  
Leaf type and persistence: evergreen  
Leaf blade length: 4 to 8 inches  
Leaf color: green  
Fall color: no fall color change  
Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower color: red  
Flower characteristic: year-round flowering; pleasant fragrance

Fruit

Fruit shape: pod or pod-like  
Fruit length: 1 to 3 inches  
Fruit cover: dry or hard  
Fruit color: green  
Fruit characteristic: inconspicuous and not showy

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: typically multi-trunked or clumping stems  
Current year stem/twig color: green  
Current year stem/twig thickness: medium

Culture

Light requirement: plant grows in full sun  
Soil tolerances: alkaline; acidic; clay; sand; loam  
Drought tolerance: high  
Soil salt tolerances: unknown  
Plant spacing: 36 to 60 inches

Other

Roots: not applicable  
Winter interest: plant has winter interest due to unusual form, nice persistent fruits, showy winter trunk, or winter flowers  
Outstanding plant: plant has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more  
Invasive potential: aggressive, spreading plant  
Pest resistance: no serious pests are normally seen on the plant

Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.
Use and Management

The dark green, glossy leaves are produced on slender, green, twining stems which become woody with age. Blooming during the warm months of the year, Allamanda should only be planted in frost-free locations, although it could be grown as an annual in colder climates due to its rapid growth rate.

The erect sprawling growth habit makes it ideal for quick coverage of trellises, arbors, or on a tree trunk. Many people use it to cover the base of a mail box or pole. Allamanda will cascade over a retaining wall and makes a nice hanging basket. Rapid growth creates a sprawling form with individual shoots growing alone, away from the rest of the plant. Regular pinching will keep the plant in bounds, but too much pinching removes flower buds which form on new growth.

Requiring full sun locations for best flowering (some flowers are produced in locations receiving only 3 to 4 hours of sun), Allamanda is tolerant of various soil types and requires only moderate moisture. Regular, light fertilization during the growing season helps promote growth and flowering.

Pests and Diseases

A witches broom can deform Allamanda.