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## Tibouchina - Fact Sheet








This South American plant is a great garden plant for areas with the right soil and the right climate.

The right soil is any good quality garden soil that has an acidic pH. That means that the pH should be around 5-6. If the pH is above 7, as it is many areas around the region, Tibouchinas will really hate the soil, burn around the leaf margins and yellow between the veins.

The right climate means warm and humid with reasonable rainfall or irrigation and mild winters. Temperatures below about -2 will usually kill Tibouchinas so make sure that you find a microclimate in your garden that is somewhat protected – especially from cold winds and from severe frosts.

To grow these plants well prune after flowering to induce a compact growth habit and better flowering next year. Young plants will benefit from the addition of a complete fertiliser and some extra water in the early years. Very few pests or diseases bother Tibouchinas if they are in the right soil and the right climate. Occasionally scale insects may make a home on Tibouchinas and you will know if they do because the black sooty mould will show up against the interesting quilted leaves. Pest oil spray will fairly easily control most scale.

There are a number of cultivars that are worth growing including

<p><i>Tibouchina lepidota</i> 'Alstonville'</p>		<p>4m</p>
<p><i>Tibouchina</i> 'Kathleen'</p>		<p>2m</p>
<p><i>Tibouchina mutabilis</i> 'Noelene'</p>		<p>2m</p>
<p><i>Tibouchina</i> 'Jules'</p>		<p>1m</p>
<p><i>Melastoma affine</i></p> <p>As you can tell from the name this is not actually a <i>Tibouchina</i> but a close relative that is native to Australian and to our area and well worth growing.</p>		<p>1m</p>

