



Botanical name: Rhododendron sect. Vireya

Common name: Tropical Vireya
Rhododendron, Malesian
Rhododendron

Family: Ericaceae

Genus: Rhododendron

Sub-Genus: Vireya

Origin: S.E Asia to Australia

Habit: range from dwarf mats to shrubs and trees

Size: 4.5 -6m x 4.5-9m

Flowers: Depending on the species and cultivar the range of colour and flower size is huge. The flowers are

Aspect: Dappled shade protected from hot afternoon sun and strong winds. Some larger varieties require shade.

Prune: Prune to reduce leggy growth. Cut just above a healthy whorl of leaves and apply a light dressing of organic ericaceous fertiliser and water well.

Propagate: Vireya cuttings root readily. Semi-hardwood cutting 5 to 7cm long, dipped in light rooting hormone, and stuck in peat/perlite will root in three to five weeks. Several cuttings placed in a pot

trumpet shaped and appear in large clusters. Blooming in from autumn to spring.

Fragrant: Some varieties are highly fragrant.

Leaves: Depending on the species and cultivar the range of leaf size and colour is huge. They range from lanceolate to elliptical in shape with scales on the underside. The leaves are in whorls. Some can be mistaken for pine needles while others have leaf blades a foot long.

Climate: Highland sub-tropical and sub-alpine regions

Soil: very well drained acidic (ericaceous) soil pH between 5-6 or less

Care: Good drainage is a must so planting on a mound (30 -45cm high) is a good idea. Keep well mulched with leaf mulch and a good organic compost. Avoid using lawn clippings or chicken manure or mushroom compost as they are too alkaline. Vireyas are surfaced rooting plants so do not plant deeply and care must be taken not to plant anything too close to vireyas for this reason.

watered in, and enclosed in a plastic bag can be rooted in a bright, warm (21°C) window.

Drought/Frost: Tender

Pests/Diseases: They generally don't suffer from insect or disease but watch for aphids on new growth and wax scale (these can be hosed off), and lace bug damage. Pale new growth could signal an iron or magnesium deficiency.

NOTE:

- The sub-genus contains approx. 310 species of Vireya.
- Vireyas are found growing as epiphytes in the moss-encrusted lofts of tree branches, on rocks or growing as terrestrials on the ground.
- Pollinated by bats and birds and to a lesser extent certain moths and butterflies.
- The only native Australian vireya is *Rhododendron lochia*.

Source:

<https://www.rhododendron.org/classification.htm>
<https://akatsukaorchid.com/content/Vireya.pdf>
www.palmwoodtropicals.com.au
www.vireya.net
<http://www.camelliaglen.com.au/vireyas/culture-notes/>