Tar Baby Camellia

Camellia japonica 'Tar Baby'



Tar Baby Camellia flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 10 feet

Spread: 10 feet

Sunlight: ◐ ●

Hardiness Zone: 6

Other Names: Japanese Camellia, Common Camellia

Description:

Lustrous evergreen foliage cover this upright, vigorous shrub; masses of rich, blood red, peony form flowers with red anthers and white filaments; blooms in late winter; provide rich, acidic, moist, well-drained soil

Ornamental Features

Tar Baby Camellia features showy double dark red round flowers with creamy white eyes and red anthers at the ends of the branches from late winter to early spring. It has dark green evergreen foliage. The glossy pointy leaves remain dark green throughout the winter.

Landscape Attributes

Tar Baby Camellia is a multi-stemmed evergreen shrub with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its average texture blends into the landscape, but can be balanced by one or two finer or coarser trees or shrubs for an effective composition.

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 has no significant negative characteristics.

Tar Baby Camellia is recommended for the following landscape applications;

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

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Planting & Growing

Tar Baby Camellia will grow to be about 10 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 10 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 40 years or more.

This shrub does best in partial shade to full shade. Keep it well away from hot, dry locations that receive direct afternoon sun or which get reflected sunlight, such as against the south side of a white wall. It requires an evenly moist well-drained soil for optimal growth, but will die in standing water. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. It is particular about its soil conditions, with a strong preference for rich, acidic soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution, and will benefit from being planted in a relatively sheltered location. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone in both summer and winter to conserve soil moisture and protect it in exposed locations or colder microclimates. This is a selected variety of a species not originally from North America.

Tar Baby Camellia makes a fine choice for the outdoor landscape, but it is also well-suited for use in outdoor pots and containers. Its large size and upright habit of growth lend it for use as a solitary accent, or in a composition surrounded by smaller plants around the base 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.