

Escapade F₁ Plumbago

P. auriculata

Approximate seed count: 2,400 S./oz. (85 S./g)

Plug Production

Media

Use a well-drained, disease-free soilless medium with a pH of 5.8 to 6.2 and a medium initial nutrient charge (EC less than 0.75 mmhos/cm with 1:2 extraction).

Sowing

Sow in 200-cell size plug trays. Plumbago seeds are very large and must be covered lightly with a coarse-grade vermiculite at sowing to retain moisture during germination.

Stage 1 – Germination takes approximately 7 to 10 days.

Soil temperature: 72 to 75°F (22 to 24°C)

Light: Optional.

Moisture: Keep soil wet (level 4) during Stage 1.

Humidity: Maintain 95%+ relative humidity (RH) until radicle emergence.

Stage 2

Soil temperature: 70 to 72°F (21 to 22°C)

Light: Up to 2,500 f.c. (26,900 Lux)

Moisture: Reduce soil moisture slightly (level 3) to allow the roots to penetrate into the media.

Fertilizer: Apply fertilizer at rate 1 (less than 100 ppm N/less than 0.7 mS/cm EC) from nitrate-form fertilizers with low phosphorous.

Stage 3

Soil temperature: 70 to 72°F (21 to 22°C)

Light: Up to 2,500 f.c. (26,900 Lux)

Moisture: Allow media to dry until the surface becomes light brown (level 2) before watering.

Fertilizer: Increase fertilizer to rate 2 (100 to 175 ppm N/0.7 to 1.2 mS/cm EC).

Growth Regulators: Generally not needed during plug production.

Stage 4

Soil temperature: 70 to 72°F (21 to 22°C)

Light: Up to 5,000 f.c. (53,800 Lux) if temperature can be controlled.

Moisture: Same as Stage 3.

Fertilizer: Same as Stage 3.

Growing On to Finish

Media

Use a well-drained, disease-free soilless medium with a pH of 5.8 to 6.2 and a medium initial nutrient charge.

Temperature

Maintain air temperature at 62 to 80°F (17 to 26°C) from transplant to sale. High light levels and warm temperatures promote the best branching.

Light

When sown in January, Escapade Plumbago will flower in May under natural days. For Fall flowering, the plants may need long-day treatment after September 1.

Irrigation

Avoid both excessive watering and drought. Do not allow the plants to wilt.

Fertilizer

Starting 1 week after transplant, apply fertilizer at rate 4 (225 to 300 ppm N/1.5 to 2.0 mS/cm) once a week using predominately a nitrate-form fertilizer with low phosphorus and high potassium. Maintain the media EC at 1.5 to 2.0 mS/cm and pH at 5.8 to 6.2. For constant fertilizer program, can apply fertilizer at rate 3 (175 to 225 ppm N/1.2 to 1.5 mS/cm) while maintaining the above recommended EC and pH ranges.

Growth Regulators

Florel spray at 1,000 ppm 1 week before pinching will produce a bushier, compact plant.

Pinching

Escapade plumbagos produce bushier plants when pinched. Pinching may be done 1 or 2 times. The first pinch should be done when the plants have developed 15 leaves. A hard pinch removing 5 leaves is recommended. Pinching will delay flowering about 2 weeks.

Container Size

Escapade plumbagos are vigorous growers that can be finished in containers ranging from 4.5-in. (11-cm) pots up to 2-gallon (20-cm) containers. Use 1 plant per 4.5-in. (11-cm) pot, and 1 to 2 plants in 1 to 2-gallon containers (18-20 cm pots).

Crop Scheduling

Sow to transplant: 4 to 5 weeks (200-cell plug)

Transplant to flower: South, 8 to 12 weeks;
North, 12 to 16 weeks

Total crop time: South, 12 to 16 weeks;
North, 16 to 20 weeks.

Common Problems

Insects: Thrips and aphids.

Garden and Landscape information

Home gardeners will see best results when they place Escapade plumbagos in full sun locations. These moderately drought-tolerant plants grow vigorously during hot weather. A perfect choice for the warm South, versatile Escapade plumbagos can grow up to 6 ft. (1.8 m) tall to create a bushy, informal hedge, and also work well in mixed containers. In the North, Escapade plumbagos are best suited to patio planters, growing to about 12 to 18 in. (30 to 45 cm) tall, with a slightly greater spread.

Note: Growers should use the information presented here as a starting point. Crop times will vary depending on the climate, location, time of year and greenhouse environmental conditions. Chemical and PGR recommendations are only guidelines. It is the responsibility of the applicator to read and follow all the current label directions for the specific chemical being used in accordance with all regulations.