**Location**

Callistemon prefer a sunny position and being an Australian native will tolerate hot conditions provided water is kept up to them.

**Watering**

Australian natives are known for their drought tolerance and hardiness, while this is true callistemon benefit greatly from regular watering as they do drink a lot of water and thrive when doing so.

Like azaleas, callistemon flowers will wilt if they get wet so be careful when watering while in flower.

**Fertilizing**

Callistemon are not particularly fussy about fertiliser and can be fed with most fertilisers. I find they respond well to regular fertilising with a low nitrogen fertiliser but have also used Charlie carp and powerfeed with no real issues. I find a low nitrogen fertiliser often produces lots of tight growth. They respond well from trace elements and micro nutrients. Australian natives are known for surviving in harsh conditions, in poor soil with minimal water. While this is true the thrive with good care, fertiliser and water.

**Pruning and wiring**

Callistemon flower from previous growth so pruning needs to be done at the right time to ensure flowering the following year. Best time to prune is just after flowering. You can use this time to shape the tree. To get nice flowers will need to let your tree get a bit wild when flowering then maintain the growth after flowering. You can carefully selective prune branches out that don’t have flower buds forming throughout the year while the tree is flowering if you want to maintain some sort of shape. I like to remove spent flowers as they wilt so the tree can put more energy in to the rest of the flowers instead of seed pods.

While callistemon are relatively flexible when wiring care does need to be taken when bending thicker branches as they tend to just let go. If bending a branch which goes to a fork in the branch be careful as callistemon split very easily at forks in branches.

Callistemon grow fast so check wires regularly, even weekly in the growing season, wire bites in fast.

**Re potting**

Re pot every 2-3 years using an open free draining mix. Natives like a slightly acidic soil. Re pot in the warmer months they respond faster. After re potting keep the water up to them. Callistemon handle root pruning well.

**Propagation**

Callistemon will strike from cutting but as they are a commonly used garden or hedge plant collecting is an efficient way to get good stock. Callistemon little john is often used as hedges around shopping centres and makes fantastic bonsai.

**Pests and disease**

Callistemon are relatively pest and disease free although they can suffer from a couple of things occasionally.

**Sawfly Larvae:** is one pest that can decimate a tree. These are easily picked off by hand or hit with a water jet.

**Scale:** is another pest that can be removed using a water jet or white oil treatment. Be sure to treat all sides of the leaf.

**Webbing caterpillar:** is not often found on callistemon but some varieties like little john are more susceptible. Look for small webs under the leaves. Yates “success ultra” works well if contact with the caterpillars is achievable which can be difficult if they have curled the leaves up with their webs.