Japanese Holly

Ilex crenata

Japanese Holly
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 8 feet

Spread: 10 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 6

Other Names: Boxleaf Holly

Description:

A high quality, multi-purpose evergreen shrub, particularly effective for massing, hedges and topiary, takes pruning very well, small leaves add aesthetic value; best in evenly moist, acidic soils

Ornamental Features

Japanese Holly has dark green evergreen foliage on a plant with a round habit of growth. The small glossy oval leaves remain dark green throughout the winter. It produces black berries from mid fall to late winter.

Landscape Attributes

Japanese Holly is a dense multi-stemmed evergreen shrub with a more or less rounded form. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other landscape plants with less refined foliage.

This shrub will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and is best pruned in late winter once the threat of extreme cold has passed. It is a good choice for attracting birds to your yard. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Insects
- Disease

Japanese Holly is recommended for the following landscape applications;

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

Planting & Growing

Japanese Holly will grow to be about 8 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 10 feet. It tends to fill out right to the ground and therefore doesn't necessarily require facer plants in front, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a slow rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 40 years or more. This is a dioecious species, meaning that individual plants are either male or female. Only the females will produce fruit, and a male variety of the same species is required nearby as a pollinator.

This shrub does best in full sun to partial shade. It prefers to grow in average to moist conditions, and shouldn't be allowed to dry out. It is very fussy about its soil conditions and must have rich, acidic soils to ensure success, and is subject to chlorosis (yellowing) of the foliage in alkaline soils. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone in winter to protect it in exposed locations or colder microclimates. This species is not originally from North America.