UF IFAS Extension UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ PROGRAM

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Ilex cornuta 'Burfordii': Burford Holly[1]

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https://ffl.ifas.ufl.edu/

Introduction

This dense evergreen shrub or small tree has glossy, dark green leaves, each with a single terminal spine. Leaves are among the glassiest and darkest green of trees. The somewhat-showy clusters of fragrant, springtime, white flowers attract bees. The large, bright red, long-lasting berries during the fall and winter provide a nice contrast to the dark green leaves. The plants are self-fertile and do not need a male plant located nearby for pollination. It is one of the most popular shrubs in some areas of the country.

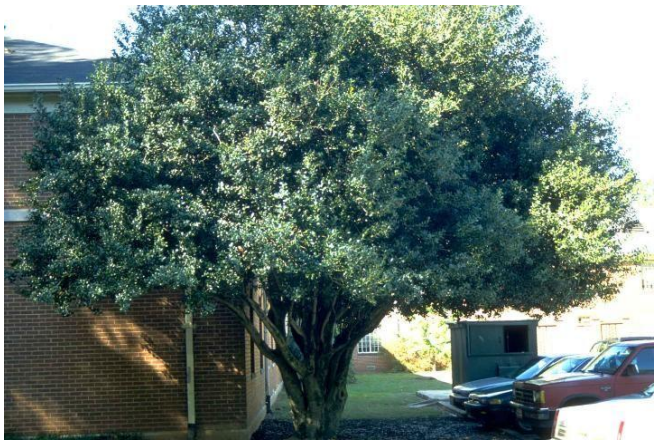

Figure 1. Mature *Ilex cornuta* 'Burfordii': Burford Holly
Credit: Ed Gilman

General Information

Scientific name: *Ilex cornuta*

Pronunciation: EYE-lecks kor-NOO-tuh

Common name(s): Burford Holly

Family: *Aquifoliaceae*

USDA hardiness zones: 7A through 9B (Fig. 2)

Origin: not native to North America

Invasive potential:has been evaluated using the IFAS Assessment of the Status of Non-Native Plants in Florida's Natural Areas (UF/IFAS 2018). This species is not documented in any undisturbed natural areas in Florida. Thus, it is not considered a problem species and may be used in Florida.

Uses: sidewalk cutout (tree pit); parking lot island < 100 sq ft; parking lot island 100-200 sq ft; parking lot island > 200 sq ft; tree lawn 3-4 feet wide; tree lawn 4-6 feet wide; tree lawn > 6 ft wide; street without sidewalk; deck or patio; screen; espalier; urban tolerant; highway median; container or planter; hedge

Availability: not native to North America

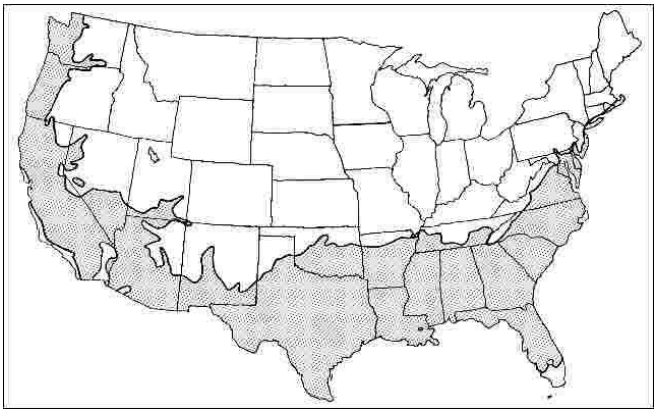

Figure 2. Range

Description

Height: 15 to 25 feet

Spread: 15 to 25 feet

Crown uniformity: symmetrical

Crown shape: vase, round

Crown density: dense

Growth rate: moderate

Texture: medium

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: alternate (Fig. 3)

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: entire, terminal spine

Leaf shape: oblong, elliptic (oval)

Leaf venation: pinnate

Leaf type and persistence: evergreen

Leaf blade length: 2 to 4 inches

Leaf color: green

Fall color: no color change

Fall characteristic: not showy

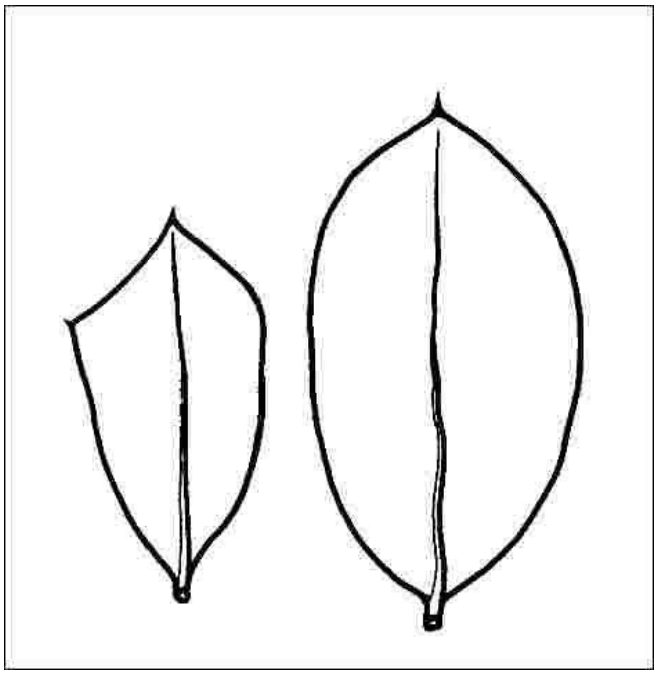

Figure 3. Foliage

Flower

Flower color: white/cream/gray

Flower characteristics: not showy

Fruit

Fruit shape: round

Fruit length: less than .5 inch

Fruit covering: fleshy

Fruit color: red

Fruit characteristics: attracts birds; showy; fruit/leaves not a litter problem

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: branches droop; not showy; typically multi-trunked; thorns

Pruning requirement: little required

Breakage: resistant

Current year twig color: green, gray

Current year twig thickness: medium

Wood specific gravity: unknown

Culture

Light requirement: full sun, partial sun or partial shade

Soil tolerances: clay; sand; loam; alkaline; acidic; extended flooding; well-drained

Drought tolerance: high

Aerosol salt tolerance: moderate

Other

Roots: not a problem

Winter interest: yes

Outstanding tree: no

Ozone sensitivity: unknown

Verticillium wilt susceptibility: resistant

Pest resistance: resistant to pests/diseases

Use and Management

Although typically pruned for formal hedges, the large form and gracefully drooping branches of Burford Holly make it ideal for unpruned natural plantings or as a specimen for spacious areas and large buildings. There are much better plants for pruning into formal hedges. Burford Holly can also be trained as an attractive vase-shaped multi-stemmed small tree. Trees trained in this fashion often have a thick crown comprised of many branches and small-diameter trunks. Burford Holly should be grown and used in this fashion more often.

Growing best in rich, well-drained, slightly acid soil, Burford Holly does well in full sun or part shade. However,

flowering and subsequent fruiting is reduced in shady locations. Burford Holly is drought-tolerant and easy to grow once established. It is well suited for low-maintenance landscapes which receive little or no irrigation or fertilizer after trees are established. Once the tree reaches 10 or 15 feet tall, growth rate slows. `Burfordii Nana' makes a better shrub than `Burfordii' due to a slower growth rate and smaller leaves.

Propagation is by cuttings only.

Pests

Burford Holly can be plagued with severe infestations of tea scale.

Diseases

No diseases are of major concern.

Literature Cited

University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences. 2018. "Assessment of Non-native Plants in Florida's Natural Areas" (https://assessment.ifas.ufl.edu, 4/29/2019) Gainesville, FL, 32611-4000, USA.

[1] This document is ENH460, one of a series of the UF/IFAS Department of Environmental Horticulture Department. Original publication date November 1993. Revised December 2006. Reviewed February 2014. Visit the Ask IFAS website at https://ask.ifas.ufl.edu for the currently supported version of this publication. © UF/IFAS. This publication is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 *To learn more about creating and maintaining attractive landscapes that protect Florida's water and natural resources, visit ffl.ifas.ufl.edu/.*

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