Introduction
This popular cultivar of glossy abelia is a fine-textured, semi-evergreen, small shrub with 1½ inch-long, red-tinged leaves arranged along thin, stiff stems. Leaves and flowers are smaller than the species. It is much more compact than the species, resembling the Japanese or yaupon hollies. Considered to be evergreen in its southern range, glossy abelia will lose some of its leaves in colder climates, the remaining leaves taking on a more pronounced red color. Reaching a height of 3 to 6 feet with a spread of 6 to 10 feet, the mounded form of ‘Sherwoodii’ glossy abelia is clothed from spring through fall with terminal clusters of delicate pink and white, small, tubular flowers.

General Information
Scientific name: Abelia x grandiflora ‘Sherwoodii’

Pronunciation: uh-BEEL-ee-uh gran-dif-FLOR-uh

Common name(s): dwarf glossy abelia, ‘Sherwoodii’ glossy abelia

Family: Caprifoliaceae

Plant type: shrub

USDA hardiness zones: 5 through 9 (Fig. 2)

Planting month for zone 7: year round

Planting month for zone 8: year round

Planting month for zone 9: year round

Origin: not native to North America

not known to be invasive

Uses: hedge; border; mass planting; attracts butterflies

Availability: somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the plant

Figure 1. Full Form - Abelia x grandiflora ‘Sherwoodii’: Sherwoodii Glossy Abelia
Credits: Edward F. Gilman, UF/IFAS
Abelia x grandiflora 'Sherwoodii' Sherwoodii Glossy Abelia

**Description**

Height: 3 to 4 feet  
Spread: 4 to 6 feet  
Plant habit: spreading  
Plant density: dense  
Texture: fine  

**Foliage**

Leaf arrangement: whorled  
Leaf type: simple  
Leaf margin: serrate  
Leaf shape: ovate  
Leaf venation: pinnate  
Leaf type and persistence: evergreen  
Leaf blade length: less than 2 inches  
Leaf color: purple or red  
Fall color: purple  
Fall characteristic: showy  

**Flower**

Flower color: pink  
Flower characteristic: spring flowering; summer flowering; fall flowering; pleasant fragrance

**Fruit**

Fruit shape: oval  
Fruit length: less than 1/2 inch  
Fruit cover: dry or hard  
Fruit color: tan  
Fruit characteristic: inconspicuous and not showy

**Trunk and Branches**

Trunk/bark/branches: not particularly showy; typically multi-trunked or clumping stems  
Current year stem/twig color: reddish  
Current year stem/twig thickness: thin

**Culture**

Light requirement: plant grows in part shade/part sun  
Soil tolerances: slightly alkaline; clay; sand; acidic; loam  
Drought tolerance: moderate  
Soil salt tolerance: poor  
Plant spacing: 36 to 60 inches

**Other**

Roots: usually not a problem  
Winter interest: plant has winter interest due to unusual form, nice, persistent fruits, showy winter trunk, or winter flowers  
Outstanding plant: not particularly outstanding  
Pest resistance: no serious pests are normally seen on the plant

**Use and Management**

Ideally suited as a low-growing foundation plant, abelia is also excellent as a tall ground cover for a large-scale commercial or industrial landscape. It can be sheared into a formal hedge or into any of a number of topiary shapes. It's nicely suited for training into a low hedge bordering a sidewalk. Growth rate is slow to moderate, making it easy to keep it from growing out of bounds with two clippings per year.

Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.
Space plants 4 to 5 feet apart in a mass planting. Be sure to set plants several feet back from a walk, driveway or lawn area, because plants grow wider than tall and often require pruning to control their lateral growth. If you need to prune in this manner, be sure to leave the bottom of the plant much wider than the top so lower foliage is left on the plant. If you attempt to shear vertically, the lower branches are shaded and often lose foliage. This will give the shrub an unsightly, dark, leafless bottom.

Glossy abelia enjoys fairly rich, moist but well-drained soil in a full sun or lightly shaded location and has good drought tolerance. Plants become thin and unattractive in the shade and do not flower. Plant on 4- to 6-foot centers to form a foundation planting, slightly closer for a hedge. The foliage darkens during the winter, but plants generally remain full all during the cold months.

Cultivars include: ‘Francis Mason’ - new green foliage changes to glossy yellow as it matures, color more noticeable in full sun, light pink flowers, 3 to 4 feet high; and ‘Prostrata’ - prostrate growth habit, white flowers, sometimes used as a ground cover. *Abelia* ‘Edward Goucher,’ a hybrid between *Abelia x grandiflora* and *Abelia schumannii*, has abundant lavender-pink flowers and showy red calyces, reaches 5 feet, and is best used in USDA hardiness zone 6.

Propagation is by cuttings of long, leafless, hardwood stems taken in November to January.

**Design Considerations**

Glossy abelia works well as a background or massing plant to highlight the forms and colors of companion plants. The fine texture and small leaves of the abelia will show well with contrasting plant features such as large leaves, coarse texture, thick stems, and dark green color. Contrasting size and shape such as low-growing groundcover with a sprawling, mounding form will emphasize the upright, vase shape of abelia. To create plant masses in large areas select plants with similar characteristics that blend with abelia. Similar textures include thin blades and clumping, arching forms of grasses and other vase-shaped, small leaved shrubs. The compact form of ‘Sherwoodii’ pairs well with taller shrubs with large coarse leaves.

**Pests and Diseases**

None of major concern but occasionally the plant is bothered by aphids.