

Ilex vomitoria 'Nana' Dwarf Yaupon Holly¹

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Introduction

The symmetrical, dense, rounded form of dwarf yaupon holly requires only infrequent pruning to maintain its 4- to 6-foot height and spread (Fig. 1). Unpruned plants eventually grow 7 to 10 feet tall and slightly wider. Roots produce sprouts at the edge of the canopy, producing dense thickets with time. Ideally suited as a low-growing foundation plant, dwarf yaupon holly 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. Most people “meatball” the plant into a globe. The small, gray-green leaves of ‘Nana’ have no spines, and the female plants of this cultivar rarely produces berries. Leaves are slightly larger than on ‘Shellings’.

General Information

Scientific name: *Ilex vomitoria* ‘Nana’

Pronunciation: EYE-lecks vom-mit-TOR-ee-uh

Common name(s): dwarf yaupon holly

Family: *Aquifoliaceae*

Plant type: shrub

USDA hardiness zones: 7 through 10 (Fig. 2)

Planting month for zone 7: year round

Planting month for zone 8: year round

Planting month for zone 9: year round

Planting month for zone 10: year round

Origin: native to Florida

Uses: bonsai; foundation; mass planting; container or aboveground planter; superior hedge; espalier

Availability: generally available in many areas within its hardiness range

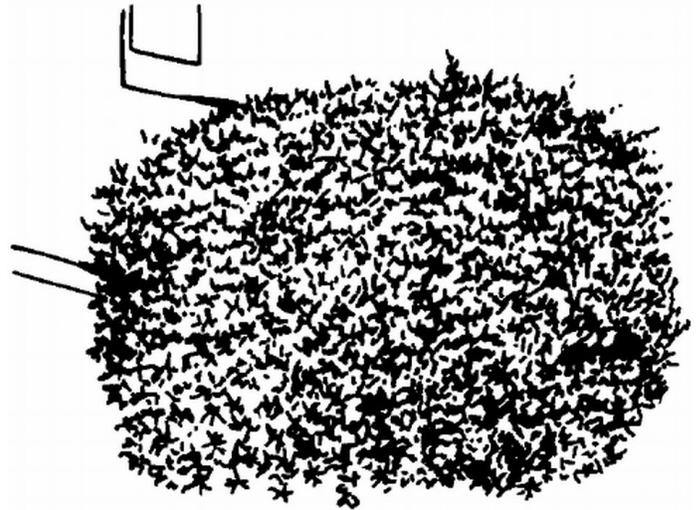


Figure 1. Dwarf yaupon holly

1. This document is FPS-274, one of a series of the Environmental Horticulture Department, UF/IFAS Extension. Original publication date October 1999. Reviewed February 2014. Visit the EDIS website at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>.
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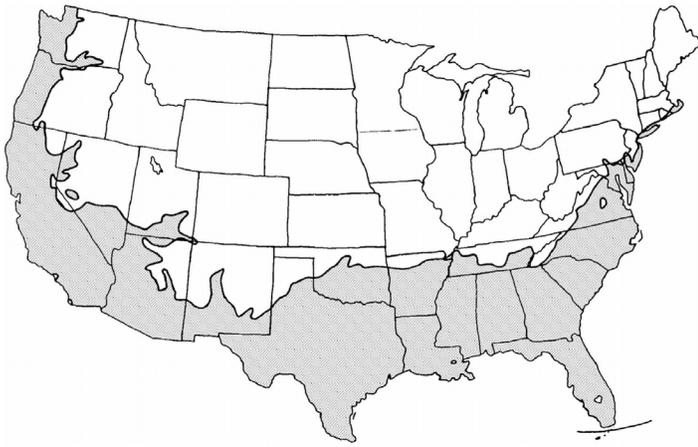


Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range

Description

Height: 4 to 7 feet
Spread: 6 to 10 feet
Plant habit: round
Plant density: dense
Growth rate: slow
Texture: fine

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: alternate
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: green
Fall color: no fall color change
Fall characteristic: not showy

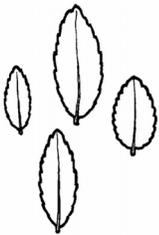


Figure 3. Foliage of dwarf yaupon holly

Flower

Flower color: white
Flower characteristic: spring flowering

Fruit

Fruit shape: no fruit
Fruit length: no fruit

Fruit cover: no fruit
Fruit color: no fruit
Fruit characteristic: no fruit

Trunk and Branches

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

Culture

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

Other

Roots: sprouts from roots or lower trunk
Winter interest: no special winter interest
Outstanding plant: not particularly outstanding
Invasive potential: not known to be invasive
Pest resistance: long-term health usually not affected by pests

Use and Management

Growing well in sun or light shade in soils from dry to wet, dwarf yaupon holly withstands drought when established and is highly salt-tolerant, making it ideally suited to seaside plantings. It is a selection of the native yaupon holly, which grows naturally without irrigation on the dunes along the Atlantic Ocean. Growth rate is slow to moderate. 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 that lower foliage is left on the plant. If you attempt to shear vertically, the lower branches will be shaded and will often lose foliage. This will give the shrub an unsightly, dark, leafless bottom.

Propagation is by cuttings.

Pest and Diseases

No pests or diseases are of major concern.