

Ilex Vomitoria 'Schilling's Dwarf' Schilling's Dwarf Holly¹

Edward F. Gilman, Ryan W. Klein, and Gail Hansen²

Introduction

The symmetrical, dense, rounded form of Schilling's dwarf holly requires infrequent pruning to maintain its 4 to 6 foot height and spread. Ideally suited as a low-growing foundation plant, Schilling's dwarf holly works well as a tall groundcover because it forms a low, dense cover of green foliage when planted in masses. It is often sheared into low hedges in formal gardens, similar to the boxwoods in the early American gardens. The small, dark green leaves have a reddish cast when they are young and no spines. This cultivar of a male plant will produce no berries.



Figure 1. Full Form - *Ilex Vomitoria* 'Schilling's Dwarf': Schilling's Dwarf Holly

Credits: Edward F. Gilman, UF/IFAS

General Information

Scientific name: *Ilex vomitoria* 'Schilling's Dwarf'

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

Common name(s): Schillings dwarf holly

Family: *Aquifoliaceae*

Plant type: shrub

USDA hardiness zones: 7 through 10 (Figure 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

Height: 4 to 7 feet

Invasive potential: not known to be invasive

Uses: bonsai; foundation; mass planting; container or above-ground planter; superior hedge; espalier

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2. Edward F. Gilman, professor emeritus; Ryan W. Klein, assistant professor, arboriculture; and Gail Hansen, professor, sustainable landscape design; Department of Environmental Horticulture, UF/IFAS Extension, Gainesville, FL 32611.



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

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

Pest resistance: long-term health

Use and Management

Growing well in sun or light shade in soils from dry to wet, Schilling's dwarf 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. Plant four to five feet apart for 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 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.