Carissa Holly

Ilex cornuta 'Carissa'



Carissa Holly
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 4 feet

Spread: 4 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 6

Other Names: Chinese Holly, Horned Holly

Description:

A compact variety producing glossy deep green foliage with a single spine at the tip; a dense, rounded growth habit that is great for massing into low hedges; an excellent lush green backdrop for flowering plants

Ornamental Features

Carissa Holly is primarily grown for its highly ornamental fruit. It features an abundance of magnificent red berries in late fall. It has attractive dark green evergreen foliage which emerges light green in spring. The glossy pointy leaves are highly ornamental and remain dark green throughout the winter.

Landscape Attributes

Carissa Holly is a multi-stemmed evergreen shrub with a mounded form. Its average texture blends into the landscape, but can be balanced by one or two finer or coarser trees or shrubs for an effective composition.

This is a relatively low maintenance shrub, and is best pruned in late winter once the threat of extreme cold has passed. It is a good choice for attracting birds and bees to your yard, but is not particularly attractive to deer who tend to leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. It has no significant negative characteristics.



Carissa Holly flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Carissa Holly is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Mass Planting
- Naturalizing And Woodland Gardens

Planting & Growing

Carissa Holly will grow to be about 4 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 4 feet. It has a low canopy. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 50 years or more.

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 may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. It is particular about its soil conditions, with a strong preference for rich, acidic soils. It is quite intolerant of urban pollution, therefore inner city or urban streetside plantings are best avoided, and will benefit from being planted in a relatively sheltered location. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone in winter to protect it in exposed locations or colder microclimates. This is a selected variety of a species not originally from North America, and parts of it are known to be toxic to humans and animals, so care should be exercised in planting it around children and pets.