First Lady Yaupon Holly

Ilex vomitoria 'First Lady'



First Lady Yaupon Holly foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 5 feet

Spread: 5 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 6

Description:

Makes a great accent or rock garden shrub; a large amount of bright red berries that persist into the winter and attract birds; does best in evenly moist, acidic soil but is drought tolerant; shows salt spray tolerance; has somewhat brittle branches



First Lady Yaupon Holly
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Ornamental Features

First Lady Yaupon Holly is primarily grown for its highly ornamental fruit. It features an abundance of magnificent red berries in early fall. It has attractive dark green evergreen foliage which emerges lime green in spring. The small glossy oval leaves are highly ornamental and remain dark green throughout the winter.

Landscape Attributes

First Lady Yaupon Holly is a dense multi-stemmed evergreen shrub with a mounded form. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other landscape plants with less refined foliage.

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. It has no significant negative characteristics.

First Lady Yaupon Holly is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Mass Planting
- Rock/Alpine Gardens
- Border Edging
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

First Lady Yaupon Holly will grow to be about 5 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 5 feet. It tends to fill out right to the ground and therefore doesn't necessarily require facer plants in front, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 15 years.

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, and is able to handle environmental salt. 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 selection of a native North American species.

First Lady Yaupon Holly makes a fine choice for the outdoor landscape, but it is also well-suited for use in outdoor pots and containers. Because of its height, it is often used as a 'thriller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the center of the pot, surrounded by smaller plants and those that spill over the edges. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when grown in a container, it may not perform exactly as indicated on the tag - this is to be expected. Also note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.