Whoa Nellie Holly

Ilex 'Whoa Nellie'

Height: 20 feet

Spread: 10 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 5

Other Names: Golden Nellie R. Stevens Holly



Whoa Nellie Holly fruit
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



Whoa Nellie Holly
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Description:

This splendid ornamental evergreen produces dazzling golden-yellow new foliage that contrasts the older dark green; plant in full sun for best color; loads of orange-red fruit that attracts birds; unusual drought and heat tolerance; a vigorous grower

Ornamental Features

Whoa Nellie Holly is primarily grown for its highly ornamental fruit. It features an abundance of magnificent orange berries in late fall. It has attractive dark green-variegated gold foliage which emerges yellow in spring. The spiny oval leaves are highly ornamental and remain gold throughout the winter.

Landscape Attributes

Whoa Nellie Holly is a dense multi-stemmed evergreen tree with a distinctive and refined pyramidal 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 tree, 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.

Whoa Nellie Holly is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- Hedges/Screening
- Naturalizing And Woodland Gardens

Planting & Growing

Whoa Nellie Holly will grow to be about 20 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 10 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 2 feet from the ground, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 50 years or more.

This tree does best in full sun to partial shade. It is very adaptable to both dry and moist growing conditions, but will not tolerate any standing water. 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 particular variety is an interspecific hybrid.



Whoa Nellie Holly foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder