Leatherleaf Mahonia

Mahonia bealei

Height: 10 feet

Spread: 5 feet

Sunlight: ◐ ●

Hardiness Zone: 4

Other Names: Beal's Barberry

Description:

Interesting blue-green foliage resembles holly leaves; the spiny leaves are held on long branches giving this upright shrub fabulous texture; treasured for its bold clusters of bright yellow flowers; great for screening or borders

Ornamental Features

Leatherleaf Mahonia has attractive bluish-green evergreen foliage on a plant with an upright spreading habit of growth. The spiny oval pinnately compound leaves are highly ornamental and turn an outstanding purple in the fall, which persists throughout the winter. It features bold racemes of fragrant yellow flowers rising above the foliage in mid spring. It produces powder blue berries from late summer to early fall.

Landscape Attributes

Leatherleaf Mahonia is a multi-stemmed evergreen shrub with an upright spreading habit of growth. 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.



Leatherleaf Mahonia
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



Leatherleaf Mahonia flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

This shrub will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and should only be pruned after flowering to avoid removing any of the current season's flowers. It is a good choice for attracting birds to your yard, but is not particularly attractive to deer who tend to leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Suckering

Leatherleaf Mahonia is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Mass Planting
- General Garden Use
- Naturalizing And Woodland Gardens



Leatherleaf Mahonia in bloom
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Planting & Growing

Leatherleaf Mahonia will grow to be about 10 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 20 years.

This shrub does best in partial shade to full shade. Keep it well away from hot, dry locations that receive direct afternoon sun or which get reflected sunlight, such as against the south side of a white wall. It does best in average to evenly moist conditions, but will not tolerate standing water. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. It is not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in rich soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution, 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 species is not originally from North America.