Fetterbush

Leucothoe fontanesiana



Fetterbush flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 5 feet

Spread: 5 feet

Sunlight: ◐ ●

Hardiness Zone: 4

Other Names: Mountain Doghobble, Dog Hobble

Description:

Originating in the eastern mountain sun-dappled ravines, this lovely colonizing shrub blooms prolificly in spring with long racemes of white bell flowers; dark glossy green foliage makes it a handsome tall groundcover

Ornamental Features

Fetterbush features showy racemes of fragrant white bell-shaped flowers hanging below the branches from late spring to early summer. It has attractive dark green evergreen foliage which emerges burgundy in spring. The glossy pointy leaves are highly ornamental and remain dark green throughout the winter. The red branches add an interesting dimension to the landscape.

Landscape Attributes

Fetterbush is a multi-stemmed evergreen shrub with a shapely form and gracefully arching branches. 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 high maintenance shrub that will require regular care and upkeep, and is best pruned in late winter once the threat of extreme cold has passed. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Suckering

Fetterbush is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- General Garden Use
- Groundcover
- Naturalizing And Woodland Gardens

Planting & Growing

Fetterbush will grow to be about 5 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 5 feet. It has a low canopy, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 40 years or more.

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 type, but has a definite preference for acidic soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This species is native to parts of North America.