Florida Privet

Forestiera segregata



Florida Privet foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 15 feet

Spread: 10 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 8b

Other Names: Florida Swamp Privet, Southern Privet

Description:

This large evergreen shrub has an upward growth habit, with small, dark glossy green foliage that is sometimes shed in winter; dark blue berries in summer; may be maintained as a small tree or hedge; highly adaptable, drought tolerant once established

Ornamental Features

Florida Privet is primarily grown for its highly ornamental fruit. It features an abundance of magnificent steel blue berries with deep purple hints from late spring to mid summer, which fade to black over time. The fruit can be messy if allowed to drop on the lawn or walkways, and may require occasional clean-up. It has attractive dark green evergreen foliage which emerges chartreuse in spring. The small glossy oval leaves are highly ornamental and remain dark green throughout the winter. The smooth gray bark and brown branches add an interesting dimension to the landscape.

Landscape Attributes

Florida Privet is a multi-stemmed evergreen shrub with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other landscape plants with less refined foliage.

This shrub will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and can be pruned at anytime. It is a good choice for attracting birds and bees to your yard. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Suckering

Florida Privet is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Mass Planting
- Hedges/Screening
- General Garden Use
- Windbreaks and Shelterbelts
- Naturalizing And Woodland Gardens

Planting & Growing

Florida Privet will grow to be about 15 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 10 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 1 foot from the ground, 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 30 years. This is a dioecious species, meaning that individual plants are either male or female. Only the females will produce fruit, and a male variety of the same species is required nearby as a pollinator.

This shrub does best in full sun to partial shade. It is very adaptable to both dry and moist locations, and should do just fine under average home landscape conditions. It is considered to be drought-tolerant, and thus makes an ideal choice for xeriscaping or the moisture-conserving landscape. This plant will benefit from an application of bonemeal and/or mycorrhizal fertilizer at the time of planting. It is not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in sandy soils, and is able to handle environmental salt. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. This species is native to parts of North America. It can be propagated by cuttings.