Dwarf Wax Myrtle

Myrica pusilla



Dwarf Wax Myrtle foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 5 feet

Spread: 5 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐ ●

Hardiness Zone: 7b

Other Names: Southern Bayberry

Description:

Select a male and female plant to produce the ornamental waxy-blue berries, that are a high energy food source for birds; tolerant of wet or dry, coastal conditions; glossy aromatic foliage is dark green above, with olive undersides; a great low hedge

Ornamental Features

Dwarf Wax Myrtle is primarily grown for its highly ornamental fruit. It features an abundance of magnificent blue berries from mid summer to mid fall. It features subtle chartreuse catkins along the branches from late winter to early spring. It has dark green foliage with olive green undersides which emerges light green in spring. The fragrant narrow leaves remain dark green throughout the winter.

Landscape Attributes

Dwarf Wax Myrtle 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.

This shrub will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and can be pruned at anytime. It is a good choice for attracting birds, bees and butterflies 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

Dwarf Wax Myrtle is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Mass Planting
- Hedges/Screening
- General Garden Use
- Topiary
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Dwarf Wax Myrtle 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 fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 10 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 performs well in both full sun and full shade. It is very adaptable to both dry and moist growing conditions, but will not tolerate any standing water. It is considered to be drought-tolerant, and thus makes an ideal choice for xeriscaping or the moisture-conserving landscape. This plant should not require much in the way of fertilizing once established, although it may appreciate a shot of general-purpose fertilizer from time to time early in the growing season. It is not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in sandy soils, and is able to handle environmental salt. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This species is native to parts of North America. It can be propagated by cuttings.

Dwarf Wax Myrtle makes a fine choice for the outdoor landscape, but it is also well-suited for use in outdoor pots and containers. With its upright habit of growth, it is best suited for use 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.