

Village Garden Center

& Landscape Service

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By Eva Soud



Foster's Holly

Ilex x attenuata 'Fosteri'

Best grown in organically rich, medium moisture, well-drained, slightly acidic soils in full sun to part shade. Best berry production in full sun. Hollies are dioecious (separate male and female plants). However, foster holly is one of the few hollies in which female plants will produce fruit without fertilization from a male pollinator. Botanically speaking, it is parthenocarpic (from Greek, parthenos meaning virgin and karpos meaning fruit). Therefore, it is unnecessary to purchase a male foster holly for a planting. Foster hollies are not reliably winter hardy throughout USDA Zone 5 and benefit from being sited in protected locations (particularly those sheltered from cold winter winds).

Common Name: foster holly

Type: Broadleaf evergreen

Family: Aquifoliaceae

Zone: 6 to 9

Height: 20.00 to 30.00 feet

Spread: 10.00 to 20.00 feet

Bloom Time: April to May

Bloom Description: White

Sun: Full sun to part shade

Water: Medium

Maintenance: Medium

Suggested Use: Hedge, Shade Tree

Flower: Insignificant

Leaf: Evergreen

Attracts: Birds

Fruit: Showy

Other: Winter Interest, Thorns

Tolerate: Air Pollution



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InkBerry



Inkberry Holly: *Ilex Glabra*

The Inkberry Holly is probably the hardiest of all the kinds of holly. It can withstand extreme cold, a fair amount of heat and grows well in wet and marshy swamp areas. The leaves, which are bright green in the beginning, turn dark and glistening green as they mature. As the plant grows older, it begins to droop towards the ground. The Inkberry Holly grows up to 8 to 10 feet. The black berries that it bears are a good source of food for birds. Since this shrub does not have a very thick foliage, it can be used as a bordering decoration around ponds, bridges, buildings, etc. Some cultivars are Shamrock, Nordic, Nigra, etc.



English Holly

English Holly: *Ilex Aquifolium*

The English Holly is a native plant of Europe. It was brought to North America to be used as an ornamental plant. An average English Holly can grow up to 30 feet. The foliage is thick and the leaves are pointed and sharp around the edges. The leaves are a deep shade of green, waxy and have a shiny appearance. The flowers are sweet-smelling and the berries are deep red. The English Holly berries are poisonous if ingested by humans. Even birds and insects wait until the berries are fully ripe before they consume the berries as they are extremely bitter. Its cultivars include Rubricaulis Aurea, Peter's, etc.



Chinese Holly

Chinese Holly: *Ilex Cornuta*



The Chinese Holly is a very densely foliated shrub that can grow up to a height of 25 feet. The leaves are deep, glossy green and the bush is rounded. The berries are initially tiny and light green, and they grow and progressively turn yellow and finally auburn. This variety is the first one that bears flowers and fruit in the spring and has the largest berries among all the holly varieties.

The unique feature about this shrub is that it can bear berries independent of male shrubs. However, berries grow abundantly if there is a male shrub in the vicinity. Since the foliage is almost impermeable, this bush is perfect to be used as a privacy hedge. Some of its cultivars are Dwarf Burford, Carissa, etc.

How to Plant a Holly Bush

If good care is not taken during planting, holly bushes will not be able to serve their purpose and your garden might turn out to look hideous! Read on to know more about how you can plant them.

First dig a deep hole in the soil where you intend to keep the bush, as they don't grow well if transferred from one location to another. The hole should be almost as deep as the container from which you will be planting the bush, and at least thrice as wide.

Then, carefully remove the bush and place it in the hole.

Holly bushes grow well in sunlight but they grow reasonably well in shade too. So, plant the bushes in a spot where they get almost equal amount of sunlight and shade.

The peculiarity of these bushes is that they are dioecious, i.e., each plant has only one set of reproductive organs, either male or female. Hence, for pollination to take place, it is necessary that male and female bushes are planted within a distance of 5 to 6 feet from each other.

After planting the bushes, water them generously.

Then fertilize the bushes with an acidic fertilizer as they prefer acidic soil.

Tip: The best time to plant a holly bush is at the beginning of winter, and in a swampy area, as hollies prefer wet areas. They are slow growers but add a merry look to your garden!

How to Identify if a Bush is Male or Female

As mentioned earlier, holly bushes are dioecious. Even though they are inherently male and female individually, it becomes rather difficult to 'identify' a male from a female at first glance. Read the tips given below to know how to identify one from the other.

By Flowers: Both male and female holly bushes bear flowers with 4 petals. If you take a minute look at the center of the flowers, you will notice either 4 yellow stamens or a green bulb-like structure. The flowers with yellow stamens are males and the ones with green bulbs are females.

By Berries: Generally, it is only female bushes that produce berries due to pollination. Hence, it is quite safe to say that holly bushes with berries are female and the ones without berries are males.



Male Flower

Female
Flower



From the garden of Eva



Turkey Pot Pie

Ingredients:

- 1 tbsp. butter
- 1/2 medium onion, chopped
- 1 stalk celery, chopped
- 1 carrot, chopped
- 2 tbsp. flour
- 2 c. turkey stock
- 2 medium Yukon gold potatoes, peeled and diced
- 1 c. shredded turkey
- 1 tbsp. parsley, roughly chopped
- 1/4 c. frozen peas, thawed
- 1 sheet frozen puff pastry dough, thawed
- 1 egg, lightly beaten

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Lay out pastry dough on a clean, flat surface. Use a 5" round, oven-safe ramekin to trace two circles on the dough, leaving 1/2" extra. Cut out the circles and set aside. (Note: I also used a small star-shaped cookie cutter to cut out two shapes for decoration.)
2. Melt butter in a medium saucepan and cook onion until soft. Stir in celery and carrots and cook for 2 minutes. Stir in flour and cook for 2 minutes. Add turkey stock and bring to a simmer. Add potatoes and simmer until tender. Stir in turkey meat, parsley, and peas. Pour mixture into two 5" oven-safe ramekins.
3. Use a pastry brush to coat the rim of each dish with a thin coating of egg. Place a pastry round across the top of each dish, and crimp the edges to seal. Brush the dough with more egg, applying the dough "flourish" if desired (be sure to brush it with egg as well). Repeat with the remaining reserved pastry.
4. Place both dishes on a rimmed baking sheet, and bake for 20-30 minutes until the pastry has puffed and turned golden brown.





Moist Apple Cake

Torta di Mele

Prep time: 20 min | Total time: 1 hour | Servings: 10

Ingredients

5 apples

Juice of 1 lemon

1 cup sugar

Seeds scraped from 1 vanilla pod or a few drops of good vanilla essence

5 eggs

2 1/2 cups plain flour

(2/3 cup butter

1 tablespoon of natural baking powder for 2 2/5 cups flour.

1/3 cup pine nuts, toasted

Directions

Preheat the oven to 340°F. Put the butter into a pot and melt in the oven, taking care that it doesn't burn.

Peel the apples and cut them into small pieces. Add the lemon juice and 1/4 cup of the sugar. Mix together and set aside.

Break the eggs into a large bowl. Add the remaining sugar and beat together well.

Add the melted butter, the vanilla, the flour and the natural baking powder, mixing well.

Add the apples.

Put the mixture in a cake tin, sprinkle the toasted pine nuts on top and bake for 40 minutes or until a skewer inserted in the center of the cake comes out clean.

Serve with whipped cream, custard or vanilla ice cream.



Living with Nature

Cedar Waxwing



Cedar Waxwings are a medium sized bird approximately 6–7 in (15–18 cm) long and weigh roughly 30 g (1.1 oz). They are smaller and more brown than their close relative, the Bohemian Waxwing (which breeds farther to the north and west). It is a "silky, shiny collection of brown, gray, and lemon-yellow, accented with a subdued crest, rakish black mask, and brilliant-red wax droplets on the wing feathers. These birds' most prominent feature is this small cluster of red wax-like droplets on tips of secondary flight feathers on the wings, a feature they share with the Bohemian Waxwing (but not the Japanese Waxwing). The wings are "broad and pointed, like a starling's." The tail is typically yellow or orange depending on diet. Birds that have fed on berries of introduced Eurasian honeysuckles while growing tail feathers will have darker orange-tipped tail-feathers. The tail is somewhat short, and square-tipped. Adults have a pale yellow belly. The Waxwing's crest often "lies flat and droops over the back of the head. It has a short and wide bill. The Waxwing's black mask has a thin white border. Immature birds are streaked on the throat and flanks, and often do not have the black mask of the adults. Males and females look alike.

The flight of waxwings is strong and direct, and the movement of the flock in flight resembles that of a flock of small pale European Starlings. Cedar Waxwings fly at 25 mph and fly at an altitude of 2,000 ft.

Cedar Waxwings are also known as the Southern Waxwing, Canada Robin, Cedar Bird, Cherry Bird, or Recellet.

The oldest observed Cedar Waxwing was eight years and two months old.

Preferred habitat consists of trees at the edge of wooded areas, or "open" forests, especially those that provide access to berry sources as well as water.

They are frequently seen in fruiting trees. Waxwings are attracted to the sound of running water, and love to bathe in and drink from shallow creeks.

In urban or suburban environments, waxwings often favor parkland with well-spaced trees; golf courses, cemeteries, or other landscaping with well-spaced trees; bushes that provide berries; and a nearby water source such as a fountain or birdbath. Also look for them near farms, orchards, and gardens, particularly ones with fruiting trees or shrubs.

Outside the breeding season, Cedar Waxwings often feed in large flocks numbering hundreds of birds. This species is nomadic and irruptive, with erratic winter movements, though most of the population migrates farther south into the United States and beyond, sometimes reaching as far as northern South America. They will move in huge numbers if berry supplies are low. Rare vagrants have reached western Europe, and there are two recorded occurrences of Cedar Waxwing sightings in Great Britain. Individual Bohemian Waxwings will occasionally join large winter flocks of Cedar Waxwings.

In winter, these birds can be very confident and will come into gardens for berry bushes and trees and to drink from fountains or bird baths.



Green in the winter garden



Black calla (*Arum italicum*), also known as Italian arum and lords and ladies, is a perennial that I call the backward plant. It begins emerging in September and grows all during winter. It has a green stem with a roll at the top. The attached roll unfurls like a flag to form an arrowhead-shaped leaf. The leaf is heavily quilted and has various degrees of variegation between the veins. Leaves can reach up to 18 inches across and a bit longer. It puts on quite a show when all else is some shade of brown or black. However, this plant has become invasive in many parts of the country, so you should be careful to remove the seeds from the garden before they mature and pull out any plants that pop up unwanted.

And, you can chew the leaves and berries for fresh breath.

Wintergreen (*Gaultheria procumbens*) is a native plant with lustrous green leaves and red berries that give color to your yard in winter.

Wintergreen (*Gaultheria procumbens*, hardy to Zone 4) is a dwarf creeping shrub without equal. It's only 4 inches or so in height with a continual creeping habit.

It has leather-like leaves of heavy substance that are just as green and polished in

January as they are in July. The deep, lustrous green leaves have companions of scarlet red berries in winter. Add a touch of frost or light snow and you have a Currier and Ives postcard in your garden.



Partridge berry (*Mitchella repens*, Zone 4) grows so close to the forest floor it looks as though it's painted in place. A loose and relaxed scrambler, partridge berry has tiny, rounded, deep-green leaves with a silver vein in the center. It also features white trumpet-shaped blooms -- always in pairs -- that produce red berries for winter color. There is also white-berried selection to add to your collection.

Projects

You Should Totally Do:

Tiny Succulent Cork Planters

- Choose a pretty cork
- Hollow it out
- Slap a magnet on the back
- Fill with a pinch or two of dirt and a succulent of your choosing

Water lightly using a eye dropper.



Or how about some mini planters.



Magnetic Wine Cork Planters

Needed:

- Corks made from cork not plastic
- Magnets
- Potting soil
- Very small succulent cuttings
- Puncher
- Paring knife
- Glue gun

How to:

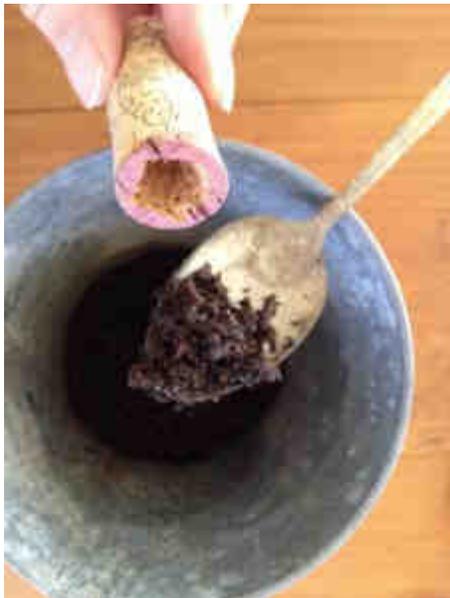
1. CAREFULLY, hollow out the center of a wine cork with the puncher and knife until you've hollowed it out halfway.
2. Glue magnet onto cork.
3. Fill the hole with potting soil and add the succulent.
4. Use an eyedropper to water.
5. Put on your fridge and enjoy!

WARNING: This might not be a craft for a child or a clumsy adult!



Perfect For:

- Hostess gifts
- Special occasions
- Wine lovers
- Green lovers
- Me
- Thank you gifts
- Green thumb friends
- really, anyone!





Then sing, young hearts that are full of cheer,
With never a thought of sorrow;
The old goes out, but the glad young year
Comes merrily in tomorrow