



Japanese Holly, Sky Pencil

Ilex crenata 'Sky Pencil'

Height: 8 feet

Spread: 3 feet

Sunlight: ☉ ●

Hardiness Zone: 6a

Other Names: Boxleaf Holly

Description:

A most unique and aptly-named evergreen shrub with an extremely upright and narrow habit of growth, superb choice for small-scale articulation in the garden creation, adds a level of dynamic interest; small leaves further add aesthetic value

Ornamental Features

Japanese Holly, Sky Pencil is primarily valued in the landscape or garden for its rigidly columnar form. It has dark green evergreen foliage. The small glossy oval leaves remain dark green throughout the winter. It produces black berries from mid fall to late winter.

Landscape Attributes

Japanese Holly, Sky Pencil is a dense multi-stemmed evergreen shrub with a narrowly upright and columnar growth habit. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other landscape plants with less refined foliage.

This shrub will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and is best pruned in late winter once the threat of extreme cold has passed. It is a good choice for attracting birds to your yard. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Japanese Holly, Sky Pencil is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Vertical Accent
- Hedges/Screening
- General Garden Use



Japanese Holly, Sky Pencil
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



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Planting & Growing

Japanese Holly, Sky Pencil will grow to be about 8 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 3 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 slow rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 40 years or more. This is a female variety of the species which requires a male selection of the same species growing nearby in order to set fruit.

This shrub does best in full sun to partial shade. It prefers to grow in average to moist conditions, and shouldn't be allowed to dry out. This plant should be periodically fertilized throughout the active growing season with a specially-formulated acidic fertilizer. It is very fussy about its soil conditions and must have rich, acidic soils to ensure success, and is subject to chlorosis (yellowing) of the foliage in alkaline soils. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone in winter to protect it in exposed locations or colder microclimates. This is a selected variety of a species not originally from North America.

Special Attributes

In Eastern Washington & Oregon Japanese Holly can have dieback from our winters, We recommend mulching with about 3 inches of bark mulch at the base of the plant going out about as wide as the crown to protect the roots. Evergreens need to be watered during the winter. Our desert climate especially in late winter to early spring evergreens can suffer during next growing season. An easy way to remember check for dryness on the holidays Halloween, Thanksgiving, New Year's Day, Valentines Day & Easter.