



Cooperative Extension Service  
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

## *Ilex crenata* 'Helleri'<sup>1</sup>

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### Introduction

Dwarf Japanese Holly is one of the finest-textured shrubs available (Fig. 1). These durable hollies are very flexible as landscape plants as they grow well in full sun to light shade. They lend themselves to a variety of soil types and are available at most nurseries and garden centers. The dark green foliage lends a rich air to any landscape, particularly when combined with lighter green turf and shrubs. Plant on three to four-foot centers to establish a row or mass planting.

### General Information

**Scientific name:** *Ilex crenata* 'Helleri'

**Pronunciation:** EYE-lecks kren-NAY-tuh

**Common name(s):** 'Helleri' Holly

**Family:** *Aquifoliaceae*

**Plant type:** shrub

**USDA hardiness zones:** 5B through 8A (Fig. 2)

**Planting month for zone 7:** year round

**Planting month for zone 8:** year round

**Origin:** not native to North America

**Uses:** foundation; mass planting; container or above-ground planter; superior hedge; border

**Availability:** generally available in many areas within its hardiness range

### Description

**Height:** 3 to 6 feet

**Spread:** 5 to 8 feet

**Plant habit:** round

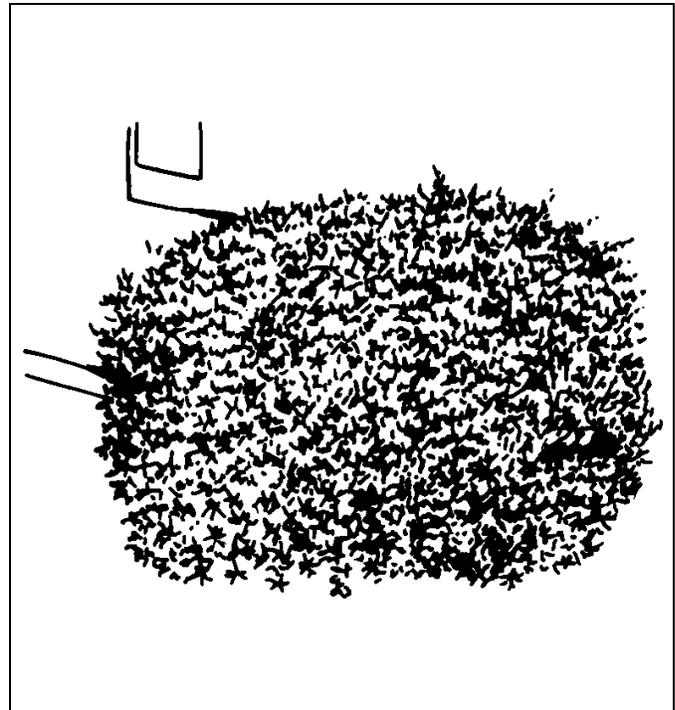


Figure 1. 'Helleri' Holly.

**Plant density:** dense

**Growth rate:** slow

**Texture:** fine

#### Foliage

**Leaf arrangement:** alternate

**Leaf type:** simple

1. This document is Fact Sheet FPS-268, one of a series of the Environmental Horticulture Department, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Publication date: October, 1999 Please visit the FAIRS Web site at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>.
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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

**Leaf margin:** serrulate  
**Leaf shape:** obovate  
**Leaf venation:** pinnate  
**Leaf type and persistence:** evergreen  
**Leaf blade length:** less than 2 inches  
**Leaf color:** green  
**Fall color:** no fall color change  
**Fall characteristic:** not showy

**Flower**

**Flower color:** white  
**Flower characteristic:** spring flowering

**Fruit**

**Fruit shape:** round  
**Fruit length:** less than .5 inch  
**Fruit cover:** fleshy  
**Fruit color:** unknown  
**Fruit characteristic:** rarely fruits

**Trunk and Branches**

**Trunk/bark/branches:** not particularly showy; typically multi-trunked or clumping stems  
**Current year stem/twig color:** green  
**Current year stem/twig thickness:** thin

**Culture**

**Light requirement:** plant grows in part shade/part sun  
**Soil tolerances:** slightly alkaline; clay; sand; acidic; loam  
**Drought tolerance:** high  
**Soil salt tolerances:** unknown  
**Plant spacing:** 36 to 60 inches

**Other**

**Roots:** usually not a problem  
**Winter interest:** no special winter interest  
**Outstanding plant:** not particularly outstanding  
**Invasive potential:** not known to be invasive  
**Pest resistance:** long-term health usually not affected by pests

## Use and Management

The Dwarf Japanese Hollies are best used in mass groups as low shrubs, low hedges, or tall groundcovers. The compact habit of growth, slow growth rate, and small leaves make these ideal plants for use as clipped, formal hedges. Adjacent plants will often grow together looking like a row or group of green mounds. Eventually, the crowns grow completely together forming a sea of green.

Cultivars include: 'Convexa' grows to about eight feet in a vase or rounded form and has cupped, glossy leaves; 'Compacta' has a compact growth habit and grows to about five feet tall; 'Helleri' has a slight grayish cast to the foliage which sets it apart from other Japanese Hollies; 'Northern Beauty' - improved cold tolerance, reaches a height and spread of three feet; 'Rotundifolia' - dense habit, large size, to 12 feet.

Propagation is by cuttings.

Pest problems are many, including scale, spider mites, spittle bugs, and nematodes, but these are often of minor consequence.

### Pests and Diseases

No diseases are of major concern.