



Cooperative Extension Service  
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

## ***Leea coccinea***<sup>1</sup>

Edward F. Gilman<sup>2</sup>

### **Introduction**

This vigorous, upright grower has distinctive, glossy, dark green, multi-divided leaves, producing a fernlike, lacy effect, similar to Fortune's Mahonia (Fig. 1). Plants take on an upright form when young, growing into six to eight-foot-tall, rounded shrubs. New growth has a slight reddish cast. It makes an attractive foundation plant, and looks great in a shrub border in groups of three or more. A single plant looks very nice located in a very low-growing ground cover.

### **General Information**

**Scientific name:** *Leea coccinea*

**Pronunciation:** LEE-uh kock-SIN-ee-uh

**Common name(s):** West Indian Holly, Leea

**Family:** *Leeaceae*

**Plant type:** shrub

**USDA hardiness zones:** 10B through 11 (Fig. 2)

**Planting month for zone 10 and 11:** year round

**Origin:** not native to North America

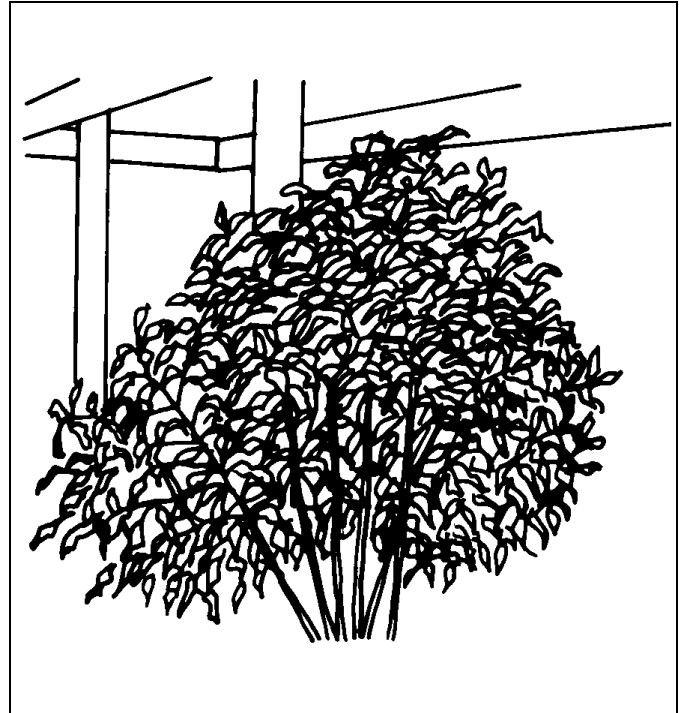
**Uses:** border; mass planting; cut foliage/twigs; superior hedge; accent; small parking lot islands (< 100 square feet in size); medium-sized parking lot islands (100-200 square feet in size); large parking lot islands (> 200 square feet in size)

**Availability:** grown in small quantities by a small number of nurseries

### **Description**

**Height:** 4 to 8 feet

**Spread:** 4 to 5 feet



**Figure 1.** West Indian Holly.

**Plant habit:** upright

**Plant density:** moderate

**Growth rate:** moderate

**Texture:** fine

**Foliage**

**Leaf arrangement:** alternate

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2. Edward F. Gilman, professor, Environmental Horticulture Department, Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville, 32611.

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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

**Leaf type:** bipinnately compound  
**Leaf margin:** undulate  
**Leaf shape:** obovate  
**Leaf venation:** brachidodrome; pinnate  
**Leaf type and persistence:** evergreen  
**Leaf blade length:** 4 to 8 inches  
**Leaf color:** green  
**Fall color:** no fall color change  
**Fall characteristic:** not showy

**Flower**

**Flower color:** purple  
**Flower characteristic:** summer flowering

**Fruit**

**Fruit shape:** round  
**Fruit length:** less than .5 inch  
**Fruit cover:** fleshy  
**Fruit color:** red  
**Fruit characteristic:** inconspicuous and not showy

**Trunk and Branches**

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

**Culture**

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

**Other**

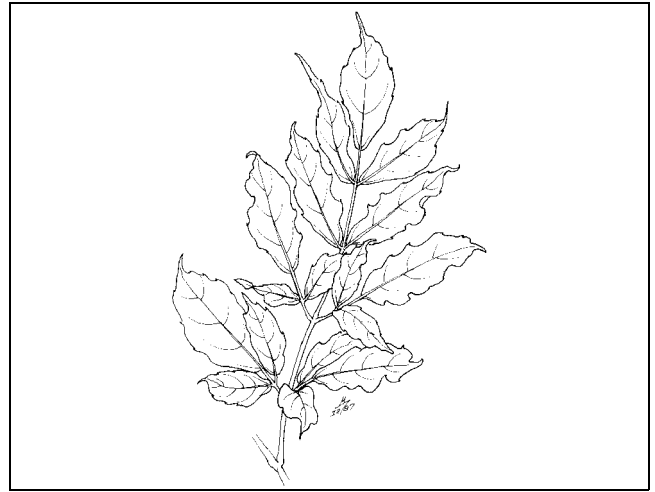
**Roots:** usually not a problem  
**Winter interest:** no special winter interest  
**Outstanding plant:** not particularly outstanding  
**Invasive potential:** not known to be invasive  
**Pest resistance:** no serious pests are normally seen on the plant

## Use and Management

Growing well in bright light, out of direct sun, West Indian Holly survives fairly heavy shade but will grow slowly. Keep the soil uniformly moist. Plant on three to four-foot centers for a mass planting.

Propagation is by cuttings.

Plants are only occasionally bothered by chewing insects.



**Figure 3.** Foliage of West Indian Holly