



Cooperative Extension Service
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

*Hydrangea quercifolia*¹

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Introduction

Oak-leaved Hydrangea has 8 to 12-inch-long leaves shaped like oak leaves (Fig. 1). They are borne on stiff, upright, hairy stems which occasionally branch. A fuller shrub can be created by pinching the new growth or cutting back old growth. The plant grows in sun or shade and prefers a rich, moist soil. In the northern part of its range, the top usually dies back during the winter and it needs shelter from high winds. Oak-Leaved Hydrangea transplants easily and has a very coarse texture and good red fall color. This sprawling, slow-growing shrub reaches 6 to 10 feet tall and spreads three to five feet. The flowers, produced in midsummer in panicles, are at first white, then fade to pink and then tan. If you wish to prune this Hydrangea to create a dense shrub, do so after it flowers so you can enjoy the spectacular flower display.

General Information

Scientific name: *Hydrangea quercifolia*

Pronunciation: hye-DRAN-jee-uh kwur-sif-FOLE-ee-uh

Common name(s): Oak-Leaf Hydrangea

Family: *Saxifragaceae*

Plant type: shrub

USDA hardiness zones: 5B through 9 (Fig. 2)

Planting month for zone 7: year round

Planting month for zone 8: year round

Planting month for zone 9: year round

Origin: native to Florida

Uses: mass planting; specimen; screen; accent

Availability: generally available in many areas within its hardiness range

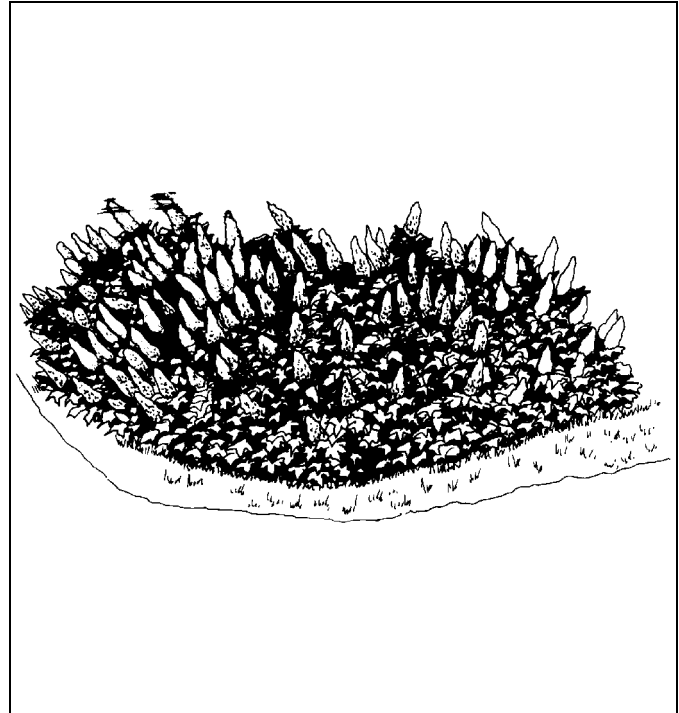


Figure 1. Oak-Leaf Hydrangea.

Description

Height: 6 to 10 feet

Spread: 6 to 8 feet

Plant habit: upright; round

Plant density: moderate

Growth rate: fast

Texture: coarse

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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Foliage

- Leaf arrangement:** opposite/subopposite
- Leaf type:** simple
- Leaf margin:** ciliate; serrate
- Leaf shape:** ovate
- Leaf venation:** pinnate
- Leaf type and persistence:** deciduous
- Leaf blade length:** 8 to 12 inches
- Leaf color:** green
- Fall color:** purple
- Fall characteristic:** showy

Flower

- Flower color:** pink
- Flower characteristic:** summer flowering; spring flowering

Fruit

- Fruit shape:** oval
- Fruit length:** less than .5 inch
- Fruit cover:** dry or hard
- Fruit color:** brown

Fruit characteristic: persists on the plant

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:** thick

Culture

- Light requirement:** plant grows in full sun
- Soil tolerances:** occasionally wet; clay; sand; acidic; slightly alkaline; loam
- Drought tolerance:** moderate
- Soil salt tolerances:** poor
- Plant spacing:** 36 to 60 inches

Other

Roots: sprouts from roots or lower trunk

Winter interest: plant has winter interest due to unusual form, nice persistent fruits, showy winter trunk, or winter flowers

Outstanding plant: plant has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more

Invasive potential: not known to be invasive

Pest resistance: no serious pests are normally seen on the plant

Use and Management

Because of their size, most residential landscapes only need one or two of these plants. Especially attractive at the edge of woods or other natural settings, Oak-Leaf Hydrangea likes fertile, acid, well-drained soil, and requires no attention once it becomes established. It makes a nice accent in a shrub border or growing out of a ground cover.

Available cultivars include: 'Snow Queen', large, pure white blooms maturing to pink; 'Snow Flake', large double flowers; and 'Harmony' with 12-inch-long, heavy white flower clusters.

Propagation is by seed, cuttings, or separation of the suckers which develop at the base of the plant.

Pests and Diseases

No pests or diseases are of major concern.

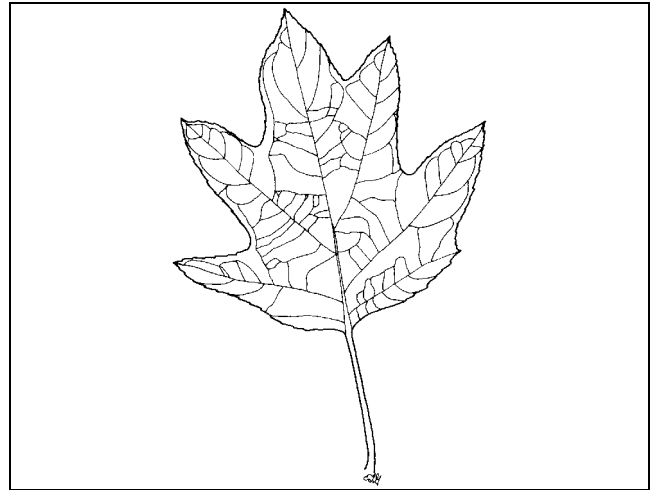


Figure 3. Foliage of Oak-Leaf Hydrangea