**Ilex crenata** ‘Convexa’

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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* ‘Convexa’

Pronunciation: EYE-lecks kren-NAY-tuh

Common name(s): ‘Convexa’ 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; screen; mass planting; container or above-ground planter; superior hedge; border

Availability: generally available in many areas within its hardiness range

**Description**

Height: 6 to 10 feet

Spread: 8 to 20 feet

Plant habit: vase shape; spreading

**Figure 1.** ‘Convexa’ Holly.

**Plant density:** dense

**Growth rate:** slow

**Texture:** fine

**Foliage**

Leaf arrangement: alternate

Leaf type: simple
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: black  
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: 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.