Introduction

The symmetrical, dense, rounded form of Dwarf Yaupon Holly requires only infrequent pruning to maintain its 4 to 6-foot height and spread (Fig. 1). Unpruned plants eventually grow 7- to 10-feet-tall and slightly wider. Roots produce sprouts at the edge of the canopy producing dense thickets with time. Ideally suited as low-growing foundation plants, Dwarf Yaupon Holly is also excellent as a tall ground cover for a large-scale commercial or industrial landscape. It can be sheared into a formal hedge or into any of a number of topiary shapes. Most people “meatball” the plant into a globe. The small, gray-green leaves of ‘Nana’ have no spines and this cultivar of a female plant rarely produces berries. Leaves are slightly larger than on ‘Shellings’.

General Information

Scientific name: *Ilex vomitoria* ‘Nana’  
Pronunciation: EYE-lesks vom-mit-TOR-ee-uh  
Common name(s): Dwarf Yaupon Holly  
Family: Aquifoliaceae  
Plant type: shrub  
USDA hardiness zones: 7 through 10 (Fig. 2)  
Planting month for zone 7: year round  
Planting month for zone 8: year round  
Planting month for zone 9: year round  
Planting month for zone 10: year round  
Origin: native to Florida  
Uses: bonsai; foundation; mass planting; container or above-ground planter; superior hedge; espalier

Availability: generally available in many areas within its hardiness range

Description

Height: 4 to 7 feet  
Spread: 6 to 10 feet  
Plant habit: round  
Plant density: dense
Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

**Growth rate:** slow  
**Texture:** fine

**Foliage**

- **Leaf arrangement:** alternate  
- **Leaf type:** simple  
- **Leaf margin:** serrate  
- **Leaf shape:** ovate  
- **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:** no fruit  
- **Fruit length:** no fruit  
- **Fruit cover:** no fruit  
- **Fruit color:** no fruit  
- **Fruit characteristic:** no fruit

**Trunk and Branches**

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

**Culture**

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

- **Roots**: sprouts from roots or lower trunk
- **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**

Growing well in sun or light shade in soils from dry to wet, Dwarf Yaupon Holly withstands drought when established and is highly salt-tolerant, making it ideally suited to seaside plantings. It is a selection of the native Yaupon Holly which grows naturally without irrigation on the dunes along the Atlantic Ocean. Growth rate is slow to moderate. Space plants 4 to 5 feet apart in a mass planting. Be sure to set plants several feet back from a walk, driveway or lawn area, because plants grow wider than tall and often require pruning to control their lateral growth. If you need to prune in this manner, be sure to leave the bottom of the plant much wider than the top so lower foliage is left on the plant. If you attempt to shear vertically, the lower branches are shaded and often lose foliage. This will give the shrub an unsightly, dark, leafless bottom.

Propagation is by cuttings.

**Pests and Diseases**

No pests or diseases are of major concern.

*Figure 3. Foliage of Dwarf Yaupon Holly*