



Cooperative Extension Service
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

***Abelia x grandiflora* ‘Sherwoodii’¹**

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Introduction

This popular cultivar of Glossy Abelia is a fine-textured, semi-evergreen, small shrub with 1.5-inch-long, red-tinged leaves arranged along thin, stiff stems (Fig. 1). Leaves and flowers are smaller than the species. It is much more compact than the species, resembling the Japanese or Yaupon Hollies. Considered to be evergreen in its southern range, Glossy Abelia will lose some of its leaves in colder climates, the remaining leaves taking on a more pronounced red color. Reaching a height of 3 to 6 feet with a spread of 6 to 10 feet, the mounded form of ‘Sherwoodii’ Glossy Abelia is clothed from spring through fall with terminal clusters of delicate pink and white, small, tubular flowers.

General Information

Scientific name: *Abelia x grandiflora* ‘Sherwoodii’

Pronunciation: uh-BEEL-ee-uh gran-dif-FLOR-uh

Common name(s): Dwarf Glossy Abelia, ‘Sherwoodii’ Glossy Abelia

Family: *Caprifoliaceae*

Plant type: shrub

USDA hardiness zones: 5 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: not native to North America

Uses: hedge; border; mass planting; attracts butterflies

Availability: somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the plant

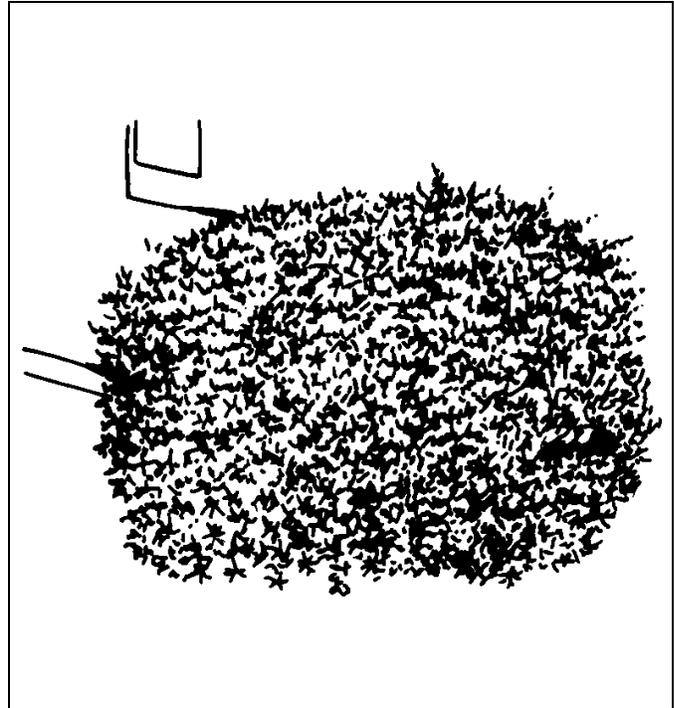


Figure 1. Dwarf Glossy Abelia.

Description

Height: 3 to 4 feet

Spread: 4 to 6 feet

Plant habit: spreading

Plant density: dense

Growth rate: moderate

Texture: fine

1. This document is Fact Sheet FPS-3, 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 EDIS web site at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>.
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Other

Roots: usually not a problem

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

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

Ideally suited as low-growing foundation plants, *Abelia* 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. It is nicely suited for training into a low hedge bordering a sidewalk. Growth rate is slow to moderate making it easy to keep it from growing out of bounds with two clippings per year.

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.

Glossy *Abelia* enjoys fairly rich, moist but well-drained soil in a full sun or lightly shaded location and has good drought-tolerance. Plants become thin and unattractive in the shade and do not flower. Plant on 4 to 6 foot centers to form a foundation planting, slightly closer for a hedge. The foliage darkens during the winter but plants generally remain full all during the cold months.

Cultivars include: 'Francis Mason', new green foliage changes to glossy yellow as it matures, color more noticeable in full sun, light pink flowers, 3 to 4 feet high; 'Prostrata', prostrate growth habit, white flowers, sometimes used as a ground cover. *Abelia* 'Edward Goucher', a hybrid between *Abelia x grandiflora* and *Abelia schumannii*, has abundant lavender-pink flowers and showy red calyces, reaches 5 feet, and is best used in USDA hardiness zone 6.

Propagation is by cuttings of long, leafless, hardwood stems taken in November to January.

Pests and Diseases

None of major concern but occasionally bothered by aphids.