

Ilex opaca

American holly



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Source:

Natural Resources Conservation Service.
PLANTS Database. United States
Department of Agriculture.

Friends of the Louisiana State Arboretum.
Featured Species. For more information
visit their website.

The Holly Family (Aquifoliaceae)

The tree has smooth gray to brown bark; ranges 15 to 100 feet tall, and depending on soil; has spiny, toothed, evergreen leaves. It is shade tolerant but benefits from limited direct sunlight.

Habitat: It prefers well-drained, sandy soils; and is found across eastern and southeastern U.S.

Interesting Facts: There must be a male and a female tree present in an area for the female to have a berry crop.

Fruit: The fruit has bright red berries containing 4-9 seeds; matures early to mid-fall, but sometimes remains on the tree until spring.

Flower: The flower is greenish white, blooming April to June. Male and female flowers are found on separate trees.

Wildlife value: Berries are eaten by many small mammals and birds; flowers provide nectar for honey bees.