

# *Ilex vomitoria*

## Yaupon



### Sources:

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

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

The Holly Family (Aquifoliaceae)

This perennial, evergreen shrub, reaching 30 feet tall has smooth gray bark with white or lighter gray spots; alternate oval-shaped leaves with slightly serrated margins. It is shade tolerant; but not fire tolerant.

**Habitat:** It prefers sandy soils, but can tolerate many soil types; found across southeastern U.S.

**Interesting Facts:** Though poisonous to humans, yaupon is the only plant native to North America that contains caffeine.

**Fruit:** The fruit is small, translucent, red berries that remain on tree through the winter; each berry contains 4 seeds.

**Flower:** The flower is small, white flowers with 4 petals; male flowers found in large clumps; and female flowers found in groups of 1-3.

**Wildlife value:** The berries are eaten by waterfowl, songbirds, raccoons, skunks, and many other animals. The evergreen foliage provides cover for many animals during the winter.