Dahoon Holly

Ilex cassine



Dahoon Holly is a lovely perennial Florida native tree that brings cheer in Fall and early Winter with its bright red berries and deep evergreen leaves. Hardy in zones 8a-10b, it grows to 30 ft. tall and about half as wide in full sun to partial shade so give it plenty of room to reach its best potential. It loves its feet wet so you will find it near ponds and edges of other wetland areas. It can be adapted to dryer conditions in your landscape, though supplemental irrigation may be needed to get it established. It bears white flowers in Spring that are primarily pollinated by bees. The plant is dioecious, meaning male and female flowers are born on separate plants. Plants of both sexes are required if berries are desired, but only the female will produce fruit.[1]

Dahoon Holly can be propagated by semi-hardwood cuttings in Spring, or by seed, though seeds can take 2 to 3 years of dormancy before they will germinate. When making cuttings, it's important to ensure you know the sex of your source tree since only a cutting from a male tree will yield a male tree and a female cutting will yield a female tree![2] Look for green flowers in Spring on a male plant and white on a female. And of course, the brilliant red fruit in the Fall on the female.



This beauty has many uses in the landscape. It can be clipped to a screen, used along driveways or sidewalks, or be allowed to grow into its natural shape of a single-trunked small tree with little pruning needed. You can even create a Bonsai with patience and care.[3] Birds and other wildlife enjoy the berries. You may see American Robins feasting on them as they pass through on their way north, as well as our familiar Mockingbirds, Cardinals, and Eastern Bluebirds.

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1. Florida Wildflower Foundation
2. Florida Native Plant Society
3. IFAS