Japanese Mahonia

Mahonia japonica



Japanese Mahonia
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 7 feet

Spread: 10 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐ ●

Hardiness Zone: 5b

Other Names: Oregon Grape Holly

Description:

A very interesting mounded shrub with leathery, sharp holly-shaped leaves; showy yellow flowers in spring and very attractive purple grape-like fruit in late summer; somewhat fussy, needs moist acid soils, some shade and protection from winter winds

Ornamental Features

Japanese Mahonia is primarily grown for its highly ornamental fruit. It features an abundance of magnificent blue berries from mid summer to early fall. It features showy racemes of fragrant yellow flowers rising above the foliage in early spring. It has dark green evergreen foliage. The spiny oval pinnately compound leaves turn an outstanding red in the fall, which persists throughout the winter.

Landscape Attributes

Japanese Mahonia is a dense multi-stemmed evergreen shrub with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other landscape plants with less refined foliage.

This shrub will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and can be pruned at anytime. Deer don't particularly care for this plant and will usually leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Suckering

Japanese Mahonia is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- General Garden Use
- Naturalizing And Woodland Gardens

Planting & Growing

Japanese Mahonia will grow to be about 7 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 10 feet. It tends to fill out right to the ground and therefore doesn't necessarily require facer plants in front, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a slow rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 30 years.

This shrub performs well in both full sun and full shade. It prefers to grow in average to moist conditions, and shouldn't be allowed to dry out. It is not particular as to soil type, but has a definite preference for acidic soils, and is subject to chlorosis (yellowing) of the foliage in alkaline soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution, and will benefit from being planted in a relatively sheltered location. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone in winter to protect it in exposed locations or colder microclimates. This species is not originally from North America.