

# UNITED STATES NATIONAL ARBORETUM

Washington, DC 20002

## USDA Hardiness Zone 7B

The months of January and February in 2012 were warmer than normal, although we did have several nights in the teens during early January. Our average low for January was 36° F (2.2° C) and for February it was 32° F (0° C). There was one snowfall event which produced less than one inch (2.5 cm) of snow in January. March was an incredibly warm month with temperatures in the upper 70s to upper 80s° F (~ 26 to 31° C) from March 14 to March 24. These above average temperatures caused the early blooming hollies to drop their flowers before allowing them to set fruit. We did have normal rainfall, but it all occurred during two days at the beginning of the month. The rest of the spring continued with above average temperatures and below average rainfall. By the last two weeks of May, we had temperatures in the mid to upper 80s and low 90s° F (~ 31 to 34° C). This trend continued throughout the summer.

During the late evening of June 30, a *Derecho*\* came through the mid-Atlantic region causing major damage due to the high winds as well as power outages. We lost several large trees on the grounds of the arboretum, but there was minimal damage to the *Ilex* collection. During July, we had five days with temperatures over 100°F (37.8° C).

The only hurricane to affect our region was Hurricane Sandy which produced 6 inches (14.2 cm) of rain. We had minimal damage as compared to the states in the Northeast. The rest of the year had fairly normal temperatures, but rainfall was still less than normal.

There were very few additions to the *Ilex* collection. We added *Ilex rotunda*, *I. Pedunculosa*, and *I. 'Winter Bounty'*

Hollies that performed well this year were: *I. 'Conot' Patriot*, *I. purpurea*, *I. verticillata 'Winter Red'*, *I. × meserveae 'Honey Maid'*, *I. 'Scepter'*, *I. 'Centennial Girl'*, and the *I. × koehneana* cultivars.

We removed many of our *I. aquifolium* cultivars that had been suffering over the past few years due to our hot and dry summers. Several cultivars were left and we will evaluate them this year for propagation and removal if needed. In addition, we focused on the propagation of our wild-collected accessions as well as our introductions that we only represented by one plant.

As far as the HSA Holly of the Year plants, *I. opaca 'Satyr Hill'*, *I. crenata 'Sky Pencil'*, *I. × attenuata 'Sunny Foster'*, *I. 'Scepter'*, *I. verticillata 'Red Sprite'*, and *I. (cornuta × aquifolium) 'Nellie R. Stevens'* are all doing well. We currently don't have any holdings of *I. × koehneana 'Lassie'*, *I. aquifolium 'Lewis'*, *I. verticillata 'Maryland Beauty'* and *I. aquifolium 'Proud Mary'*

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\* A widespread, long-lived straight-line, windstorm that is associated with a fast-moving band of severe thunderstorms.