

TYLER ARBORETUM

515 Painter Road, Media, Pennsylvania USDA Hardiness Zone 6

There was no noticeable winter damage to the Tyler Arboretum Holly Collection in 2013. Snowfall levels and temperatures January through March were within normal range. The first unusual weather event occurred in June, when we received more than 10 in. (25.4 cm) of rain. This is as much rain in one month as is usual for our entire spring, and it occurred during the bloom time of *Ilex verticillata*. All our groups of *I. verticillata* 'Winter Red', however, had good fruit set in the fall except for one fairly new planting, which fruited sparsely. A wet June was followed by a record heat wave in July when we had 11 days over 90 °F (32.2 °C). The rest of the summer was moderate, into a mild fall. We had one snow event of 6 inches (15.2 cm) in December.

In 2013, we added 50 *I. glabra* 'Compacta' for a mass planting with other natives in a border area between a meadow and a natural woodland. We also added one *I. opaca* as part of an eventual screen for a new maintenance structure near our Holly Collection. No new *Ilex* taxa were added to the collection. Nine *Ilex* were removed from the collection in 2013. Seven of these were not firmly established in new mass plantings and included: *I. × meserveae* 'Mesdob' China Boy (2), *I. × meserveae* 'Mesog' China Girl (4), and *I. crenata* 'Drops of Gold' (1). An *I. × attenuata* 'Foster No. 2' had to be removed during a construction project and one plant, *I. 'Shamrock'*, died over winter in the polyhouse. Each of these taxa is still represented within the collection. Presently, our collection totals 589 *Ilex* accessions and 146 *Ilex* taxa.

The Holly Collection grows well at Tyler Arboretum. The hollies receive no special care and no supplemental irrigation after the first year of planting. They also are not pruned beyond removing damaged branches, which allows us to view their habit under the light and spacing conditions where they grow. Favorites this year for outstanding form include *I. 'Venus'*; *I. opaca* 'Satyr Hill' and 'Miss Helen'; *I. aquifolium* 'Lewis'; and *I. 'Serendipity'* (for its small conical shape). Favorites for foliage include *I. 'Venus'*; *I. cornuta* 'Pendula'; and the dark lustrous green of *I. aquifolium* 'Lewis'. Those hollies noteworthy for fruit set this year include *I. cornuta* 'Slack'; *I. 'Lydia Morris'*; *I. 'Venus'*; and *I. pedunculosa*. The deciduous hollies *I. verticillata* 'Winter Red' and *I. 'Sparkleberry'* also had abundant crops of fruit.

Our collection contains seven of the Holly of the Year cultivars. Many of these were named as "favorites" above and are among the best specimens in our collection.

2003: *I. opaca* 'Satyr Hill' – Excellent shape with a single leader and particularly good medium green foliage.

2005: *I. × koehneana* 'Lassie' – Excellent plant with dense branching to the ground, good medium green, glossy foliage, and good fruiting.

2006: *I. × attenuata* 'Sunny Foster' – Tyler's specimens have lost their variegation, perhaps because they are shaded.

2007: *I. aquifolium* 'Lewis' – Excellent pyramidal form, with dense branching to the ground.

2010: *I. verticillata* 'Red Sprite' – Moderate fruiting.

2011: *I. (cornuta × aquifolium)* 'Nellie R. Stevens' – Good foliage; The specimen is shaded and its habit is fair.

2013: *I. pedunculosa* – Tyler has some large specimens that are over 50 years old. The specimens in shaded sites have lustrous, green foliage. A female specimen in full sun had excellent fruiting, but the leaves are quite chlorotic. We would like to add additional *I. pedunculosa* plants to our collection.

Alison Dame, Plant Recorder

The 2011 Tyler Arboretum report was inadvertently omitted from the 2012 HSA Journal. It is now available on our website – Editor