

## SANDHILLS COMMUNITY COLLEGE EBERSOLE HOLLY COLLECTION

Pinehurst, NC USDA Hardiness Zone 7b

January 2014 included some colder than usual days with temperatures dropping in to the double and even the single digits. March of the 2014 year there was one day that we did receive some snow coupled with a layer of ice (sleet and freezing rain) over top of the snow accumulation. Snow remained on the ground for approximately two days after the initial precipitation. I don't believe that the snow and ice conditions had a negative impact on any of the hollies in our collection as the colder temperatures did not extend over a long period of time. The summer of was hot and humid—typical for North Carolina weather. There was a short period of drought where rain was not received for about two to three weeks. The fall and beginning of winter were not very harsh. There were not many days that the weather was significantly hot, cold, or drier than usual. No snow or icy conditions occurred at the end of 2014.

As of my time maintaining the Holly garden in 2014, no hollies have been added to our collection. The following hollies have been removed or will be removed in the future due to their declining condition:

*Ilex aquifolium* 'Chief'  
*I. aquifolium* 'Ciliata Major'  
*I. aquifolium* 'Green'  
*I. crenata* 'Piccolo'  
*I. crenata* 'Glass'  
*I. crenata* 'Repandens'  
*I. crenata* 'Golden Heller'  
*I. crenata* 'Rotundifolia suspensa'  
*I. cornuta* 'Pendula'  
*I. glabra* 'Compacta' (Inkberry)  
*I. opaca* 'Betty Pride'  
*I. serrata* National Arboretum Japanese winterberry  
*I. (serrata × verticillata)* 'Sparkleberry'  
*I. vomitoria* 'Nana'

Though this list seems long, about a third of these hollies can be replaced from local nurseries. The remaining hollies have proven hard to find, so in place of the seemingly more rare hollies I think that we will try a different route and replace these with some different more accessible or local types of hollies that we believe will perform better.

### **Performance:**

Our *I. opaca* 'Clarendon Spreading' has been a very strong holly in our collection and has maintained a good shape without any pruning.

*Ilex rotunda* (listed as Korean Seedling in our inventory) is a very large and exceptionally cool looking holly in our collection. It is located at the bottom of a hill close to our wetland garden area and despite the amount of shade there is doing very well since it is such a well established holly.

*Ilex purpurea* 'Peachleaf' is also doing very well and is close to the same area as the *rotunda* listed above. This tree is very large so the canopy covers part of a path in our garden which makes it very cool to walk under. This holly is also very established as it has been in our collection for 35 years.

*Ilex crenata* 'Helleri' is a very well performing plant in the collection. This plant maintains a great shape and well as full foliage.

### **Holly of the Year:**

*Ilex × meserveae* 'Mesgol' Golden Girl™: This holly did exist in our collection at one time and still appears in our records. However it was either removed without being recorded or simply died in the garden without being recorded. This holly was located in an area that has suffered a lot from the lack of sunlight. At least one other holly planted in this general area has suffered and declined as well.

*Ilex* × ‘Nellie R. Stevens’ performs very well in in our collection. We have more than one planted in our gardens and they all maintain a very good shape with thick foliage and lots berries.

*Ilex verticillata* ‘Red Sprite’ was removed from our collection in 2012.

*Ilex* × *attenuata* ‘Sunny Foster’ performs well here in our garden despite the lack of full sunlight.

*Ilex opaca* ‘Satyr Hill’ is fairly large and is also fighting for sunlight in this area of the garden. Many large pine trees and other hollies are planted nearby. I wouldn’t say this holly performs badly, as it is doing fairly well for what is up against.

Overall the holly collection at Sandhills Community College is doing well. There are a few struggles here and there with certain plants but for having such a large collection this can be expected. We have much to look forward to with removing the hollies that are truly struggling and possibly replacing them with a healthier specimen or a different holly altogether.

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