

SANDHILLS COMMUNITY COLLEGE EBERSOLE
HOLLY COLLECTION

Pinehurst, NC USDA Hardiness Zone 7b

2016 started off with a mild winter. There were a few days in which we did see snow and ice, but no major winter storm to cause any noticeable damage to the collection. Temperatures were average with only a few days lower than 20 °F (−6.6 °C). Spring and summer temperatures were average for our region and brought adequate amounts of rain to the area, reducing our need to irrigate frequently. In October 2016, Hurricane Matthew brought enormous rain to our region. Fortunately, no damage was done to the holly collection. The end of 2016 was like 2015 with warmer than average temperatures and few days with below freezing temperatures.

Last year we started a project that involved rebuilding an old brick walkway that had become uneven and damaged over the years. We have not finished this project as of the end of 2016, but the students have been working hard with the little amount of time they have to finish this project. The stair walkway is coming along nicely and will likely be completed by mid-2017. We started propagating a handful of our hollies that are hard to find to keep them in our collection. We will continue to propagate hollies that are rare or look to be declining to have them if needed in the future.

We added the following hollies to the collection in 2016: *Ilex crenata* ‘Golden Helli’, *I. crenata* ‘Bennett’s Compacta’, *I. crenata* ‘Green Luster’, *I. × attenuata* ‘Nasa’ and *I. vomitoria* ‘Shadow’s Female’. So far, these new additions are doing well and we hope to see a lot of new growth from them this coming season.

Ilex buergeri is a very good performing holly here in our collection. It has bright leaves and a nice conical shape. According to our records there was an *I. buergeri* planted in 1982 but was destroyed in the winter of 1984–85. The *I. buergeri* currently in our collection was planted in 1996 and is now very established and healthy, standing at least 25’ (7.62 m) tall.

The year 2016 can be seen as a starting point of our rehabilitation of some areas in our collection since we had some struggles in previous years. We look forward to propagating more of our collection, adding more hollies that we do not currently have, removing plants that do not belong, pruning and maintaining the shape of certain hollies and to continue replacing the hollies that have been damaged over the years.

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