



January 2014

Ilex crenata balls 80-90cm wide

Ilex crenata is an evergreen plant native to Eastern China and Japan and is a perfect alternative to the more recently problematic *Buxus*.

The small leaves are rounded, dark green and glossy, very similar in appearance to *Buxus*, but can be identified by its alternate (not opposite) leaf arrangement and the crenate / toothed margin. Its resistance to pests and diseases, in particular blight, make it an ideal substitute. In late spring, it produces a delicate white flower followed in autumn by small insignificant black berries.

Japanese Holly grows well on all but heavy soils and makes a handsome topiary specimen. The evergreen and compact habit allows it to often be clipped into cones, balls, spirals, bonsai and hedges.

Ilex crenata Fastigiata is an upright columnar form of Japanese Holly. It can be clipped to keep it dense or left to grow as a specimen plant.

Plant Profile

Name: *Ilex crenata*

Common Name: Japanese Holly

Family: Aquifoliaceae

Height: 3-5m

Demands: Will grow well on all but heavy soils

Foliage: Small rounded leaves, dark green and glossy with a crenate margin

Flower: Very small white flower in spring

Fruit: Small, insignificant berries follow the flowers, ripening black in autumn.



Japanese Holly domes 1.8-2.0m in airpot container

Deepdale
 Japanese: イヌツゲ *inutsuge*
 Cloud pruning (see below) is
 a Japanese method of training
 trees or shrubs to resemble
 clouds. Known as Niwaki it
 translates as 'garden tree'.



Ilex crenata container grown bonsai specimens



Japanese Holly balls in airpot container



Close up of the glossy foliage



Ilex crenata Fastigiata



Unripe berries of *Ilex crenata*