Japanese Cleyera

Cleyera japonica

Japanese Cleyera foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 12 feet

Spread: 10 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 6b

Other Names: Ternstroemia gymnanthera

Description:

This plant is noted for its striking foliage which is dark green and glossy; perfect along a border, trained up a wall, or in a container; likely to need pruning; susceptible to and should be protected from spider mites

Ornamental Features

Japanese Cleyera has attractive dark green evergreen foliage on a plant with an oval habit of growth. The glossy oval leaves are highly ornamental and remain dark green throughout the winter.

Landscape Attributes

Japanese Cleyera is a multi-stemmed evergreen shrub with a shapely oval form. Its average texture blends into the landscape, but can be balanced by one or two finer or coarser trees or shrubs for an effective composition.

This shrub will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and should only be pruned after flowering to avoid removing any of the current season's flowers. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Insects

Japanese Cleyera is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Mass Planting
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting

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Planting & Growing

Japanese Cleyera will grow to be about 12 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 10 feet. It has a low canopy, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a slow rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 30 years.

This shrub does best in full sun to partial shade. It does best in average to evenly moist conditions, but will not tolerate standing water. It is particular about its soil conditions, with a strong preference for rich, acidic soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone in winter to protect it in exposed locations or colder microclimates. This species is not originally from North America.

Japanese Cleyera makes a fine choice for the outdoor landscape, but it is also well-suited for use in outdoor pots and containers. Because of its height, it is often used as a 'thriller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the center of the pot, surrounded by smaller plants and those that spill over the edges. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when grown in a container, it may not perform exactly as indicated on the tag - this is to be expected. Also note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.