



Wax Myrtle



- **Category:** Trees & Shrubs
- **Type:** Broadleaf Evergreen
- **Exposure:** Full Sun / Part Shade
- **Blooms:** Early Spring
- **Flowers:** White
- **Fruit:** Gray
- **Foliage:** Dark Green
- **Form:** Round
- **Maximum Growth:** Approx. 15'h x 15'w
- **Zone:** 7 – 11
- **Drought Tolerance:** High
- **Scientific Name:** *Myrica cerifera*
- **Usage:** Ornamental, Specimen, Screen, Mass



Introduction

Wax myrtle is also known as Southern bayberry or Candleberry because the American colonists used the fruit's pale blue, waxy covering to make fragrant bayberry candles. This broadleaf evergreen shrub or tree grows quickly to 15 to 20 feet high and wide. It can be pruned to maintain certain heights and widths. A compact variety is available. The leaves are small glossy green. Inconspicuous flowers appear in early spring, followed by fruit in late summer through winter. The grayish-white fruit is small (1/8 inch wide), heavily coated with wax and massed in clusters on the stems of the previous season's growth. Only female plants bear berries.

Use and Management

Wax myrtles are useful as screen plants, informal hedges, or roadside plantings. The foliage and berries are pleasantly aromatic. Birds are attracted to Wax myrtles, which they use for food and shelter. Wax myrtles make good beach plants, since they tolerate drought, sand, sun and salt spray. Wax myrtles are not particular about soil, but they prefer good drainage and slightly acid soils. Plant the shrubs in partial shade to full sun. They do not require a lot of maintenance. Large shrubs can be pruned (limbed up) to form an attractive small tree with a handsome gray, almost white bark. Wax myrtles are tough, durable shrubs. They have no serious plant diseases or insect problems.

Characteristics

- Attracts birds
- Plant as screens or informal hedges

Planting

- Typically planted in 1, 3, 5, 10, 15, 30, or 45 gal containers.
- B&B trees are specified in height (6' – 8' ht, etc)
- Container trees can be double the price of B&B trees
- Plant container trees in late summer, if price allows
- Plant B&B trees if they were dug and cured in the winter months

