**Ilex cassine** ‘Angustifolia’

Edward F. Gilman and Dennis G. Watson

**INTRODUCTION**

‘Angustifolia’ Dahoon Holly has narrower, more linear leaves than the species and more berries (Fig. 1). Attractive when tightly clipped into a tall screen or allowed to grow naturally into its single or multi-trunked, small-tree form, ‘Angustifolia’ Dahoon Holly is ideal for a variety of landscape settings. Capable of reaching 40 feet in height, it is usually seen at a height of 20 to 30 feet with a 10 to 18-foot spread. The smooth, supple, shiny, dark green, evergreen leaves, two to three inches long, have just a few serrations near the tip. Possessing male and female flowers on separate plants, at least two ‘Angustifolia’ Dahoon Hollies must be planted in the landscape to ensure production of the brilliant red, sometimes yellow, small berries in fall and winter. The berries serve as an excellent food source for wildlife.

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

**Scientific name:** Ilex cassine ‘Angustifolia’

**Pronunciation:** EYE-lecks kuh-SIGH-nee

**Common name(s):** ‘Angustifolia’ Dahoon Holly

**Family:** Aquifoliaceae

**USDA hardiness zones:** 7 through 11 (Fig. 2)

**Origin:** native to North America

**Uses:** Bonsai; container or above-ground planter; hedge; wide tree lawns (>6 feet wide); medium-sized tree lawns (4-6 feet wide); recommended for buffer strips around parking lots or for median strip plantings in the highway; near a deck or patio; reclamation plant; screen; narrow tree lawns (3-4 feet wide); specimen; no proven urban tolerance

**DESCRIPTION**

**Availability:** grown in small quantities by a small number of nurseries

**Height:** 20 to 30 feet

**Spread:** 10 to 18 feet

**Crown uniformity:** irregular outline or silhouette

**Crown shape:** round; vase shape

**Crown density:** dense

**Growth rate:** medium

**Texture:** fine

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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

**Foliage**

**Leaf arrangement:** alternate (Fig. 3)  
**Leaf type:** simple  
**Leaf margin:** entire; pinnate  
**Leaf shape:** oblong; oblanceolate  
**Leaf venation:** pinnate  
**Leaf type and persistence:** evergreen  
**Leaf blade length:** 2 to 4 inches  
**Leaf color:** green  
**Fall color:** no fall color change  
**Fall characteristic:** not showy

**Flower**

**Flower color:** white  
**Flower characteristics:** inconspicuous and not showy; spring flowering

**Fruit**

**Fruit shape:** round  
**Fruit length:** < .5 inch  
**Fruit covering:** fleshy  
**Fruit color:** red

**Fruit characteristics:** does not attract wildlife; inconspicuous and not showy; no significant litter problem

**Trunk and Branches**

**Trunk/bark/branches:** bark is thin and easily damaged from mechanical impact; droop as the tree grows, and will require pruning for vehicular or pedestrian clearance beneath the canopy; routinely grown with, or trainable to be grown with, multiple trunks; not particularly showy; no thorns  
**Pruning requirement:** requires pruning to develop strong structure  
**Breakage:** resistant  
**Current year twig color:** brown; green  
**Current year twig thickness:** thin

**Culture**

**Light requirement:** tree grows in part shade/part sun; tree grows in full sun  
**Soil tolerances:** clay; loam; sand; slightly alkaline; acidic; extended flooding; well-drained  
**Drought tolerance:** moderate  
**Aerosol salt tolerance:** moderate
**Pests and Diseases**

No pests or diseases are of major concern.

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**Other**

- **Roots:** surface roots are usually not a problem
- **Winter interest:** no special winter interest
- **Outstanding tree:** not particularly outstanding
- **Invasive potential:** little, if any, potential at this time
- **Verticillium wilt susceptibility:** not known to be susceptible
- **Pest resistance:** no pests are normally seen on the tree

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**USE AND MANAGEMENT**

It lends itself well to use as a specimen or small patio or shade tree, and is ideal for naturalizing in moist locations. It appears to adapt well to the confined spaces of urban and downtown landscapes but will require pruning of the drooping branches to create clearance below for pedestrians and traffic. Best to locate the plant where it will not require removal of these drooping branches to allow for the full development of the rounded, vase-shaped form. It would make a nice, fine-textured component in a shrub border or could be planted as a screen 10 feet apart.

Growing well in full sun to partial shade, ‘Angustifolia’ Dahoon Holly does best on moist soils, and is found on wet, boggy soils of swamps in its native environment. It can tolerate drier locations with some watering but may have a thin crown.