

English Yew



Taxus

Taxaceae

Taxus baccata



GENERAL DESCRIPTION: The English Yew is not as prevalent in America as in England where some specimens are 60' high. In America it is a small tree with multiple upright branches that spread out in a vase like manner. The deep green needle, the red arils, and the beautiful reddish-brown furrowed and scaly bark make this a great addition to the small garden or as a grouping in a larger landscape. **All parts of the plant are poisonous!**

HABIT AND SIZE: 30-60-' high and half as wide in a wide-spreading and densely branched somewhat upright habit that presents a broad-rounded crown. The trunk is fluted.

LANDSCAPE VALUE: Good in shady areas as an understory tree in parks and gardens. Good for hedges, screens and foundation plantings. Hardiness a problem in Zone 5.

LEAVES: Needles 0.5-1.25" long and 0.125" wide, convex, tapering to a horny tip, a deep green on the upper surface, yellowish green underneath with vague lines of stomata. Margins recurved and midrib prominent. Spirally arranged, three dimensionally situated on erect shoots but appearing two dimensionally arranged on horizontal shoots or shaded plants.

FLOWERS: This is a gymnosperm so there are no flowers just male and female strobili on separate plants. The male strobili are stalked, round and arise from the axils of the leaves on the undersides of the branchlet of the previous year. Each strobilus with 6-14 stamens with short filaments. Female strobili in the leaf axils, solitary and green with a single ovule.

FRUIT: No true fruit just a seed that is olive-green inside a red covering called an aril. 0.25".

BUD: Terminal and lateral buds small to inconspicuous, green to brownish green.

DISEASES AND INSECTS: *Taxus* mealybug, black vine weevil, scale and midge.

HARDINESS AND RANGE: (5)6-7. Native to England

CULTIVARS: 'Adpressa' and 'Adpressa Fowle'- densely set dark needles, latter more compact; 'Fastigiata'- known as the "Irish Yew", columnar in habit; 'Repandens'- wide branching, more hardy, branch tips slightly pendulous. Many cultivars are shrub like.