

American Beautyberry

Callicarpa americana

Beautyberry, also called American mulberry, is native to flatwoods and hammocks but thanks to birds it has spread near and far. This Florida native is a dazzling plant and its bright purple fruits are some of the most striking around.

Beautyberry is a sprawling, small shrub (3 to 8 feet tall; 4 to 8 feet wide) that works well in borders or as a specimen plant. The showy clusters of shiny purple fruits are densely packed and encircle the woody stems. If not devoured first by birds, the fruits will persist for several weeks after the plant drops its leaves.

You can plant beautyberry at any time during the year, and it will be drought-tolerant once established. Beautyberry prefers rich soils, but will also grow in poor, sandy soils.

Type: shrub

USDA hardiness zones: 7 through 11

Uses: foundation; border; mass planting; container or aboveground planter; naturalizing

Origin: native to Florida

Height: 3 to 8 feet **Spread:** 4 to 8 feet

Plant spacing: 36 to 60 inches

Light requirement: plant grows in part shade/part sun

Soil tolerances: acidic; slightly alkaline; sand; loam; clay

Drought tolerance: moderate

Soil salt tolerances: poor

Invasive potential may self-seed each year

Pest resistance: no serious pests are normally seen on the plant

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Photo: UF/IFAS