## Ilex glabra
**Inkberry**

This native* holly of the Atlantic and Gulf Coastal Plains displays lustrous evergreen foliage, which, along with its adaptability to varying light and moisture conditions, makes it a desirable alternative to finicky boxwoods. Wildlife favor its fruit and honey bees its nectar.

### Shrub
- **Height:** 6–10 feet
- **Spread:** 6–12 feet
- **Bloom Color:** Greenish white

### Characteristics
- Evergreen with rounded to broad spreading form
- Dioecious: separate male and female plants
- Leathery, glossy, oval leaves, dark green above and lighter below, with finely toothed tips
- Small white flowers in May and June
- Small, black, berry-like drupes from September to March; male plant needed for females to bear fruit
- Spreads by root suckers to form colonies

### Attributes
- Tolerates shade, dry soil, wet soil, some salt, air pollution, and rabbits; dislikes alkaline soil
- No serious pests or diseases but may develop leaf spot; deer seldom severely damage
- Gallberry honey produced from nectar
- Attracts bees to the nectar and 15 bird species and small mammals to the fruit; provides cover

### Growing and Maintenance Tips
- **Soil Requirements:** Well-drained, acidic
- **Light Requirements:** Sun, Partial Shade
- **Water Requirements:** Moist, Wet
- **Protect from harsh winter exposure; prune to shape in spring before new growth appears**
- **Use as a border, hedge, or for erosion control**
- **Hardiness:** USDA Zones 5–9

### Excellent Replacement for
- **Barberis thunbergii** - Japanese Barberry
- **Buxus species** - Boxwood
- **Ligustrum species** - Privets
- **Viburnum dilatatum** - Linden Viburnum

*In DE, it is common in the Coastal Plain. Its status in PA is extirpated. In VA, it is frequent to locally common in the south and central Coastal Plain; rare in the Piedmont; and not native to NoVA.