
ENVIRONMENTAL HORTICULTURE

Environmental Horticulture #EH402



WINTER CREEPER

PRODUCTION AND CONSUMER CARE

Thomas M. Blessington, David L. Clement, and Kevin G. Williams
Central Maryland Research and Education Center
University of Maryland

INTRODUCTION

- Common name: Winter Creeper
- Scientific name: *Euonymus fortunei*
- Named after plant explorer Robert Fortune
- Native to China
- Woody evergreen vine growing 2-3' tall when serving as groundcover
- Can grow 40-70' when climbing as a vine
- Leaves are arranged in opposite pairs with a finely serrated margin
- Small, greenish yellow flowers bloom in spring or early summer
- Pale green berries appear by mid-summer
- Has a sterile juvenile climbing phase and an adult flowering phase
- Hardy in zones 5-9

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

- Prefers full sun or partial shade
- Grows well in almost any media, as long as it is well-drained
- Requires watering only in times of drought
- Fertilize once a year in the fall
- Add a 2-4 inch layer of organic material at the base of the plant

PROPAGATION

- Can be propagated by sowing seeds in a cold frame in the fall
- When they are large enough to handle, prick seedlings into individual pots and grow them indoors over their first winter

- Transplant into the garden after danger of frost has passed
- Cuttings taken in summer root easily
- Cuttings taken from lateral shoots produce low, spreading plants; cuttings taken from vertical shoots produce upright plants

DISORDERS

- Scale insects
 - Form blister-like outgrowths on stems and leaves
 - Scrape off minor infestations with a fingernail
 - Treat heavy infestations with neem oil soap
- Bacterial crown gall (*Agrobacterium tumefaciens*)
 - Forms tumor-like swellings on stems and leaves
 - Remove infected stems
 - Remove heavily infected plants
- Anthracnose
 - Forms spots on leaves
 - Prune away diseased branches

CONSUMER CARE

- Propagated as an ornamental plant
- Used as groundcover or as a vine to climb walls and trees

- On variegated cultivars, remove any foliage that reverts to a pure green
- Considered an invasive species in parts of the eastern United States

CULTIVARS AND SPECIES

- *Euonymus fortunei*
 - ‘Emerald Gaiety’: green and white variegated leaves
 - ‘Green and Gold’: green and yellow variegated leaves
 - ‘Colorata’: leaves turn purple in fall and winter
 - ‘Silver Queen’: green leaves with a wide white edge

References

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Euonymus_fortunei
<http://www.botany.com/euonymus.html>
<http://www.yardener.com/Creeper,Winter.html>
http://www.floridata.com/ref/E/euon_for.cfm

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