

# American Wintergreen



Eastern Teaberry is an understory plant in the blueberry family. Leaves and fruits are used to make wintergreen oil which is used in gum, candy and toothpaste. Fruits can be eaten raw or cooked in desserts or salads.

## *Gaultheria procumbens*

- **Use:** An evergreen ground cover native to eastern North America, provides a full year of interest. In spring the glossy green leaves partner with small nodding white or blush pink flowers, which turn to bright red berries that linger over winter to please the birds. Plant in a rock garden, woodland garden, or along a foundation. **Winner of the RHS Award of Garden Merit.**
- **Exposure/Soil:** Part sun (morning sun/ afternoon shade)-shade. Can even tolerate heavy shade, but will produce less berries. Moist, acidic well-drained soil, but not soggy soil.
- **Growth:** Grows to 4-6" tall and continues to creep at a slow pace. Plants can be spaced 10-14 inches apart but will tend to spread and form a dense carpet.
- **Hardiness:** Zone 3-8; Perennial
- **Foliage:** Evergreen. New growth is light green with a wine-colored tinge. Simple, entire margin elliptical to oblong glossy dark green leaves turn purple in the fall. When the leaves are crushed, a wintergreen fragrance is released.
- **Flower:** Small, pinkish-white, waxy urn-shaped flowers bloom from June to August, which form at the base of the leaves. The round fleshy scarlet seed capsules are a food source for a variety of birds and small animals.

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