

Southern Gentleman Winterberry



Ilex verticillata 'Southern Gentleman'

- **Use:** Produces a striking and long-lasting display of brilliant red winter berries on large plants of upright form. Planted at woodland's edge or in a massed grouping, 'Sparkleberry' will add sparkle to your landscape! Fruiting is improved with a male cultivar, but will fruit without them as well if you have some native *Ilex vomitoria* or *serrata* in the area. Beloved by birds and great for holiday cut flower arrangements. Plant as a hedge, border tree, or foundation planting. The foliage is a food source for wildlife. It is also a host plant for butterflies and attracts specialized bees.
- **Exposure/Soil:** Full sun to partial shade. It is adaptable to various soil types, including heavy clay, but it requires an acidic soil. Prune to shape in early spring just before new growth appears.
- **Growth:** Grows 6-8' tall and wide in a branched shape.
- **Hardiness:** Zone 5b-9; Shrub
- **Foliage:** Deciduous. Small green foliage with yellow autumn foliage. Minor toxicity. Ingestion may cause vomiting, diarrhea, or other illness in humans.
- **Flower:** Because 'Southern Gentleman' is a male plant, it produces no fruit. Winterberry is dioecious, meaning individual flowers are either male or female, but only one sex is found on any one plant so both male and female plants must be grown if seed is required. An excellent pollinizer for late-flowering female southern hollies, such as Sparkleberry, Winter Red, and Winter Gold. Plant one male for every five female plants.

As it prefers moist soil and can tolerate poorly drained soils, it can also be planted near a pond or in a rain garden.

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