

Carissa Holly



- **Category:** Shrubs
- **Type:** Broadleaf Evergreen
- **Exposure:** Part Sun / Part Shade
- **Blooms:** Spring
- **Flowers:** White
- **Fruit:** Red Berries
- **Foliage:** Dark Green
- **Form:** Round
- **Maximum Growth:** Approx. 3'h x 5'w
- **Zones:** 8 to 10
- **Drought Tolerance:** High
- **Scientific Name:** *Ilex cornuta 'Burfordii Nana'*
- **Usage:** Screen, Foundation, Foreground, Mass



Introduction

Carissa Holly is a compact, dense evergreen shrub with small, glossy, dark green leaves, each with a single terminal spine. The somewhat-showy clusters of fragrant, springtime, white flowers are followed in fall and winter by some bright red berries. However, the berry display is mostly inferior to the Burford Holly. The shrub stays small, eventually growing to 8 feet if not pruned. Most Carissa Holly plants are kept smaller than this.

Use and Management

A dense rounded silhouette develops without clipping making it well suited for planting along a foundation. It is often used as a mass planting on commercial properties to form a tall ground cover or low shrub mass around parking lots. One yearly pruning can easily keep this plant in bounds in most landscape settings, unless it is clipped into a formal hedge. Two or three clippings may be needed for hedges. It shears fairly well, but will thin slightly toward the base, especially if not located in sun. Clip the hedge so it is wider at the bottom than at the top to allow maximum light penetration to bottom foliage. This will keep the hedge full to the ground.

Growing best in rich, well-drained, slightly acid soil, Carissa Holly does well in full sun or part shade. The plant is very drought tolerant, requiring little, if any, irrigation once established. One or two fertilizations are all that is needed to maintain good leaf color and adequate growth.

Holly can be bothered by scale and aphids. No diseases are of major concern.

Additional Characteristics

- **Soil Moisture:** Moist, well-drained
- **Soil Types/Tolerance:** Slightly alkaline; clay; sand; acidic; loam
- **Plant Habit:** Round
- **Uses:** Border; mass planting; hedge
- **Additional Features:** Red berries in winter
- **Special Resistance:** None



Carissa Holly Continued

Planting

- Available in 1, 3 or 5 gal containers.
- Suggested plant spacing are: Plant 24” to 36” OC
- Bed Preparation:
 - Spread 3” of bed mix in ground cover beds
 - Till 6” deep, rake beds to drain away from structure
 - Plant
 - Topdress with 2” of double ground (fine) hardwood mulch.
- Hand water in after planting
- Set sprinkler controller to water beds:
 - Once every two days for two weeks in spring and early fall.
 - Once a day for two weeks when temperatures reach 98+ degrees.
 - Have Owner monitor moisture and report over or under watering immediately.
 - After two weeks reassess the watering needs, and set at twice a week thereafter.

