

# Taxus x media - Anglojap Yew (*Taxaceae*)

*Taxus x media* is a tough, drought tolerant shrub with flat-needled foliage. Anglojap Yew is often spreading, and used as a formal or informal hedge, especially at entranceways and foundations. It is very common in midwestern landscapes and the best evergreen hedge for northern climates.

## Form



age, if unpruned



-slow growth rate

## Culture

-full sun to full shade

-performs best in full sun in moist to dry, but very well-drained soils of average fertility; highly adaptable to poor soils, compacted soils, very dry soils, heat, drought, shearing, pruning, and root pruning, but does not tolerate poorly drained soils that give it "wet feet", leading to root rot and the resultant decline or death

-Yew Family, with black vine weevil being the primary cosmetic pest problem, creating a notch-shaped feeding pattern in the foliage; while other pests and diseases can occur, they rarely do, and the only major concern (as noted above) is proper placement in a well-drained or dry site

-abundantly available in B&B form, but increasingly in container form

-unlike spreading or upright Arborvitae or Junipers (the other major alternatives for common evergreen shearable shrubs), *Taxus* can be moderately to severely cut back to the bare stems below the evergreen foliage, and it will often slowly recover and send out sparse new shoots, especially if the pruning is done in very early spring

-all yews are toxic when eaten by humans and animals, including the leaves, stems, bark, and seeds (but not the fleshy portion of the fruits)

## Foliage

-evergreen

-needles are flat, in paired rows (pectinate) along each side of the stem



## Flowers

-dioecious (separate male and female plants), and ornamentally insignificant

-staminate flowers are tan-white, miniature, globose, solitary in the leaf axils from the previous season, and shed much pollen

-pistillate flowers are like miniature stalked cones, green, and solitary

## Fruits

-red arils, often hidden in the foliage

-Sept. and not long persistent

## FEATURES

-generally a medium evergreen shrub

-variable from 2-20' high and usually wider than tall

-becoming an open and spreading oval (the oval is generally on its side) with

-highly variable among the cultivars, and often sheared to fit the dimensions needed for a particular site or hedge

## Twigs

-green, slowly changing to brown-red

## Trunk

-reddish-brown, often hidden by the foliage

-exfoliating (larger forms may be limbed up to reveal the ornamental bark)

## USAGE

## Function

-foundation, informal or formal hedge, group or mass planting, specimen, or entranceway shrub

-often overused due to its being evergreen, drought tolerant, and very pruneable

-used extensively in the middle part of the country, but it winter burns in the extreme north and melts out in the southern zones

## Texture

-medium texture

-thick density

## Assets

-drought tolerance

-evergreen

-takes well to shearing or severe pruning

## Liabilities

-does not tolerate wet sites at all (entire plant becomes chlorotic yellow, then dead brown)

-occasionally a solitary branch will suddenly "brown" and die (cause uncertain)

-usually gets out of bounds with time

## Habitat

-Zones 4 to 7

-parents native to England and Japan

## SELECTIONS

## Alternates

-evergreen shrubs, especially those that are shearable (*Buxus* hybrids, *Ilex x meserveae*, *Juniperus chinensis* cultivars, *Taxus baccata*, *Taxus cuspidata*, *Thuja occidentalis* cultivars, etc.)

## Cultivars – Variants – Related species

-*Taxus x media* - a plethora of cultivars exist, selected for compactness, growth rate, growth habit, stem and foliage density, foliage color in summer or winter, foliage texture, heat tolerance, or cold hardiness; some of the most common cultivars are listed below according to the three basic growth habits:

-**spreaders from the start:** 'Berryhillii', 'Chadwickii', 'Everlow', 'Sebian', 'Tauntonii', 'Wardii'

-**rounded in youth and spreading with age:** 'Brownii', 'Densiformis', 'Fairview', 'L.C. Bobbink', 'Nigra', 'Runyan'

-**upright columnar:** 'Citation', 'Hicksii', 'Stoveken', 'Viridis'

-*Taxus baccata* '**Repandens**' - a dwarf spreader, very slowly to 3' x 12', with dark green needles that are sickle-shaped, with the ends of the branches being semi-pendulous, but not reliably hardy in the northern portion of zone 5 (use *Taxus x media* 'Everlow' instead); functionally a tall groundcover shrub

-*Taxus cuspidata* '**Capitata**' - upright pyramidal, often to 20' x 5' (can be 40' x 10' under optimum conditions), gets leggy with age, but often limbed up anyway to reveal its purplish-red-brown exfoliating bark; tight pyramidal form in youth yields to a graceful 45 degree angled branching, and finally becomes spreading or rounded with age (unless it is sheared to maintain its youthful pyramidal shape); found at entranceways, large foundations, and as a specimen shrub