



Wax myrtle bushes

Planting Tips:

Wax myrtles can be propagated from cuttings or seeds. This plant likes full sun, but it will tolerate partial shade. A hardy plant, the wax myrtle will grow in wet, dry, and sandy conditions once it has taken root. The wax myrtle will spread by growing new shoots from the roots of a larger plant.

These shrubs grow quickly, so frequent trimming is necessary to maintain a particular height. New growth is evident by a bright green color and is easily broken from the original branches.

Visitor Education Center (VEC)

About Us

The Visitor Education Center (VEC) at the North Mississippi Fish Hatchery is the first and only facility of its kind in Mississippi. It is owned and operated by the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks.

In addition to the native habitat area, the VEC features a 10,000 gallon aquarium, interactive exhibits, displays, artifacts, fishing rodeo pond, gift shop and gallery, and the World Record White Crappie. All of these elements serve as entertaining and engaging learning experiences for all visitors.

The VEC promotes the sport of freshwater fishing in Mississippi, and encourages the conservation and stewardship of aquatic resources. The facility offers guided and self-guided tours along with a myriad of programs and workshops for the public.



Flowers

MISSISSIPPI NATIVE: WAX MYRTLE

(Myrica cerifera)

**NMFH Visitor
Education Center**

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Green berries

Description/Season:

The wax myrtle is a broadleaf, evergreen shrub with multiple trunks. Leaves are glossy and olive green. The bark on some of the shrubs develops into a grayish-white color. This evergreen produces very small flowers in the early spring, which last through June.

Small clusters of berries coated with wax replace these flowers. Only female plants produce berries, as long as male plants are nearby. The wax myrtle produces berries beginning in late summer. These berries remain through the winter. Berries start out green and turn pale blue in the winter.

Size:

These shrubs reach heights and widths of 15 feet or more. The leaves range from 1 ½ inches to 4 ½ inches long. Fruit clusters may be 1/8 of an inch wide. **Wax myrtles can grow up to 5 feet per year.**

Other Names:

*Southern Wax Myrtle,
Bayberry, and Candle Berry*

Habitat:

Wax myrtles are very drought tolerant and are found in various types of habitats.



Ripe berry clusters

Interesting Facts:

The leaves have a spicy fragrance and are still used today for candle scents. Berries were once boiled and used as wax for candles. The wax myrtle provides excellent cover and food for birds and other wildlife. The VEC finds numerous mockingbird and wren nests in the branches of this shrub. The wax myrtles are highly flammable and **spread quickly**.



Information Sources: Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, MSU Extension, Clemson.edu, USDA, and VEC Staff. Pictures taken at the VEC (Wiggins, E.J.); property of MDWFP.

