

Littleleaf Boxwood (*Buxus microphylla*)

Littleleaf boxwood is an evergreen shrub in the Buxaceae (boxwood) family and native to Japan. *Buxus* is the Latin name for boxwood or box tree. The common name of boxwood refers to the wood used to make carved decorative boxes. Another etymology is that boxwood describes the square stems of its young plants.

The Littleleaf boxwood can grow to 4' tall with a 4' spread. Like other boxwoods, the Littleleaf boxwood prefers moist, cool, well-drained soil and is adaptable to various soil types. Since the roots are shallow, mulch heavily to help retain moisture. Once established this plant is typically quite drought tolerant. Plant in full sun to light shade but provide some protection from wind and winter weather, as foliage tends to turn an orangish-brown with extremes on some varieties. It prunes exceptionally well, but do not prune until after the possibility of a late spring frost to prevent damage to new growth. Propagate by stem cuttings, which root easily. This plant is resistant to damage by rabbits and deer.

Littleleaf boxwood is a versatile slow-growing broadleaf evergreen shrub that provides landscape interest in all four seasons. It has the smallest leaves of all the boxwoods creating a densely packed surface that is easily shaped into a medium-size hedge, topiary, or bonsai. Small non-showy flowers arrive in the spring and provide a nice fragrance for a short time.

Grow it in a container, along a border, or as an edging or hedge. It also is appropriate as an accent, specimen, placed in small groups, mass planted, or used along a foundation.