

Nandina, Heavenly Bamboo (*Nandina domestica*)

Alex X. Niemiera, Associate Professor, Department of Horticulture

Summary:

Foliage: Evergreen or semi-evergreen broadleaf

Height: 10 feet

Spread: 5 feet

Shape: Upright, cane growth (very little side branching)

Heavenly bamboo is a medium-large upright shrub. In late spring it bears showy white flowers and in the late fall/winter it has attractive reddish foliage (sun) and large clusters of red berries. This species can tolerate full sun or full shade and is drought tolerant. There are several dwarf cultivars that are suitable for small spaces.

Plant Needs:

Zone: 6b (6a) to 9

Light: Partial shade to full sun

Moisture: Wet to moist to dry

Soil Type: Sandy, loam, or clay

pH Range: 3.7 to 6.4

Functions:

Suggested uses for this plant include border, accent plant, and foundation.

Planting Notes:

Select a location that is protected from harsh winds.

Foliage color varies depending on sun the plant receives.

Care:

Careful pruning produces denser growth.

Prune 1/3 of plant's wood in spring by removing oldest branches & any weak growth at ground level.

This plant adapts to extreme soil and exposure conditions and is easy to maintain.

Problems:

No serious insect or disease pests.

Alternatives:

Consult local garden centers, historic or public gardens and arboreta regarding cultivars and related species that grow well in your area.

Cultivars of *Nandina domestica*:

`Alba' has off-white berries.

Gulf Stream™ is compact 4 foot tall form with good fall/winter color.

`Harbour Dwarf' is a very popular cultivar that forms a 2 to 3 foot mound and has deep purple fall/winter color.

Comments:

The unbranched, reed-like stems (cane growth) with evergreen leaves clustered at the tip give this plant an exotic, bamboo-like appearance.

Large clusters of red fruit in fall & winter create interest against the background of leafy growth.

Nandina is a highly ornamental plant that grows and fruits best in the warmer parts of Virginia (6b and warmer). This species will grow in zone 6a, however, it will suffer stem damage at temperatures near zero degrees F and below. **In the warmer parts of Virginia and states to the south, *Nandina* has proved to be invasive. Consult your local extension agent to determine if *Nandina* is appropriate for your area.**

This material was developed by Carol Ness as part of the Interactive Design and Development Project funded by the Kellogg Foundation.