GardenWorks™

Everything to Make Your Garden Work!

Massachusetts Bearberry

Arctostaphylos uva-ursi 'Massachusetts'

Massachusetts Bearberry flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 12 inches

Spread: 4 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 2b

Other Names: Kinnikinik

Description:

An extremely hardy and tough groundcover requiring poor acidic sandy soil; low growing; whitish-pink flowers in spring, red fruits and reasonable fall color

Ornamental Features

Massachusetts Bearberry features dainty nodding shell pink bell-shaped flowers at the ends of the branches in mid spring. It features an abundance of magnificent red berries from late summer to late fall. It has forest green evergreen foliage. The tiny glossy round leaves turn burgundy in the fall, which persists throughout the winter.

Landscape Attributes

Massachusetts Bearberry is a multi-stemmed evergreen shrub with a ground-hugging habit of growth. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other landscape plants with less refined foliage.

This is a relatively low maintenance shrub, and should not require much pruning, except when necessary, such as to remove dieback. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Massachusetts Bearberry is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Groundcover

Planting & Growing

Massachusetts Bearberry will grow to be about 12 inches tall at maturity, with a spread of 4 feet. It tends to fill out right to the ground and therefore doesn't necessarily require facer plants in front. It grows at a slow rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 20 years.

This shrub does best in full sun to partial shade. It is very adaptable to both dry and moist growing conditions, but will not tolerate any standing water. It is considered to be drought-tolerant, and thus makes an ideal choice for a low-water garden or xeriscape application. It is very fussy about its soil conditions and must have sandy, acidic soils to ensure success, and is subject to chlorosis (yellowing) of the foliage in alkaline soils, and is able to handle environmental salt. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This is a selection of a native North American species.