

**Common Name:** Glossy Abelia

**Scientific Name:** *Abelia x grandiflora*

**Order:** Dipsacales

**Family:** Caprifoliaceae

### **Description**

Glossy abelia is a fine-textured, whorled, sprawling shrub with 1.5-inch-long, red-tinged leaves arranged along thin, arching, and multiple stems. The height of a glossy abelia ranges from 6 to 10 feet with a spread of 6 feet. The gently rounded form of glossy abelia is clothed from spring through fall with deadly groups of delicate pink and white, small, tubular flowers. Multiple stems arise from the ground in a vase shape, spreading apart as they rise into the foliage. This plant is also known to



attract butterflies and bees. The fruit description is about ½ inch long, it's a hard and dry seed that is a tan color, and is an oval shape. The margin of the leaf is a serrate. The venation of the leaf is pinnate. Glossy abelia is a semi-deciduous to an evergreen shrub. It stands out from other plants because the leaves usually keep the reddish shrubbery all summer long, but many plants with reddish leaves lose their pigment later in the summer. Considered to be evergreen in its southern range, glossy abelia will lose 50% of its leaves in colder climates, and the remaining leaves will take on a more distinct red color. Glossy abelia is a heat and drought resistant plant.

### **Growth Habit**

The shape of this plant starts off to be a round shape and then as it grows it will become more of an oval or vase shaped. The trunk of a glossy abelia is not usually very showy but they usually have several trunks or a lot of stem close together. They have a reddish tint to their stem and are thin in their size.

### **Hardiness Zone(s)**

For glossy abelia, the temperatures will range from -20°F all the way to 30 °F. This would be the zone from 5-9 on a map. This plant will do fine in areas such as the mid-west and all the way down to the south.

### **Culture**

This plant will need very little maintenance once established and growing to its potential. Abelia benefits from springtime pruning, but can be pruned, as needed any time since flowers are acceptable on current season's growth. Thinning the shrub will help speed the process of branching and create a broader and lushier plant by letting more light to reach the interior foliage. Light applications of a slow-release fertilizer may also be beneficial for increased growth and flowering. The plant needs to be planted in a well-drained soil, enriched with organic matter and maintain a 2- to 3-inch layer of organic mulch. Glossy abelia performs best in sunny locations. It will become thin and nasty in the shade where it may also have difficulty flowering.

The pH levels for these plants need to be acidic to slightly alkaline. It also can be planted in sandy and clay soil. When the plants are planted they need to be planted anywhere from 36-60 inches apart. During the winter months the greenery usually darkens but is still a pretty plant during the cold months.

### **Diseases & Insects**

Glossy abelia does not usually have very many problems with pests or disease, though it has been known to have some problems with aphids.

### **Landscape Value**

Glossy abelia grows in a straight, spreading vase shape. If glossy abelia is left unpruned with numerous thin stems arising from the ground then the stems will eventually branch near their tips forming a shrub with a filled top and a thinner bottom. The flowing nature of glossy abelia makes it ideal for use as a specimen, foundation plant, or shrub border. It also can be planted along a steep bank for erosion control, or it can be clipped into a hedge. When you plant the glossy abelia you need to make sure that the top of the hedge is clipped narrower than the bottom to allow adequate light to reach the bottom foliage. This will help keep the plant full all the way to the ground. Glossy abelia is something that you would want around your house or office to provide you with some beautiful white, and pink flowers to help make your house or office stand out.

### **References**

- Gilman, E. F. 1999. *Abelia x grandiflora*. Baker County IFAS Extension, University of Florida. Online. <<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/fp001>> Accessed 14 April 2015.
- Gilman, E. F. 2015. *Abelia x grandiflora*. University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences Extension. Online. <<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/fp001>> Accessed 14 April 2015.
- Guinn, E. 2010. Glossy Abelia – *Abelia x grandiflora*. Virginia Cooperative Extension, Virginia Polytechnic Institute, Virginia State University. Online. <[https://pubs.ext.vt.edu/3010/3010-1488/3010-1488\\_pdf.pdf](https://pubs.ext.vt.edu/3010/3010-1488/3010-1488_pdf.pdf)> Accessed 14 April 2015.

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