

Aquifoliaceae (Holly Family) Key

Key to species in Newfoundland and Labrador

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- 1a. Leaves green, membranaceous; blades elliptic, lanceolate, to oblanceolate, to 7 cm long; margins entire, except for a few bristle-tipped teeth near the mucronate apex; petioles purple; flowers unisexual (plants dioecious), occasionally also bisexual, axillary, on long peduncles, 2.5 cm long; petals 4–5, yellow, linear; male flowers have 4–5 stamens; fruit a magenta (rarely pale yellow) drupe. *Ilex mucronata* (winterberry)
- 1b. Leaves dark green, firm; blades elliptic to obovate, 2–10 cm long; margins sharply serrate, apex abruptly acuminate; petioles green; flowers unisexual, occasionally also bisexual, axillary, on very short pedicels; corolla usually 6–8-lobed, white; male flowers have 4–8 stamens; fruit a red drupe. *Ilex verticillata* (mountain holly)

Ilex (Aquifoliaceae) Comparison Chart

| Species: | <i>Ilex mucronata</i> | <i>Ilex verticillata</i> |
|----------------|--|--|
| | mountain holly | winterberry |
| Leaves | blades elliptic, oblong, to oblanceolate; yellow green, dull , to 7 cm long; apices blunt to acute, mucronate ; bases tapering to rounded; margins entire , or with a few small bristle-tipped teeth near the apex; petioles distinctly purple | blades elliptic to obovate, dark green, shiny, 2–10 cm long ; apices acute to abruptly acuminate; bases tapering; margins sharply serrate ; petioles green |
| Flowers | flowers open before leaves emerge; peduncles 1–2 cm long; petals 4–5, yellow, linear | flowers open as leaves expand; pedicels very short; corolla white, with 5–8 rounded lobes |
| Stamens | stamens 4–5 | stamens 4–8 |
| Fruit | purplish-red or magenta drupes ; 6–10 mm diam.; pedicels elongate in fruit to 2.5+ cm | orange-red to red drupes ; 5–7 mm diam.; persisting well into winter |