

International *Ilex* Cultivar Registration

By Jim Resch
Holly Registration Chair

1-23 *Ilex opaca* ‘Suzanne’

Female

Registered: January 5, 2023

William Cannon
2081 Main Street, Brewster, Massachusetts 02631

The selection originated as a chance seedling which germinated in the wild, and was discovered in woods south of Boston, Massachusetts in the early 2010s by Richard Cannon. He noticed its abundant, glossy fruit and alerted his brother, noted holly grower William Cannon. Cuttings were taken and propagated by William Cannon, and the largest of these has been grown since about 2015 in his holly collection in Brewster, Massachusetts, where its desirable properties have been confirmed. A particularly attractive sprig was exhibited in the 2018 Holly Society Sprig Contest, under the tentative name ‘Marianne’. Mr. Cannon has since named the selection ‘Suzanne’, after his eldest daughter.

The ‘Suzanne’ specimen in Mr. Cannon’s collection has grown quite rapidly into an upright, broadly conical evergreen tree, 2.4 m (8 ft) tall and 1.8 m (6 ft) wide after about seven years, though hurricane force winds have broken off a portion of the tree’s leader in the past. The plant displays a horizontal branching habit. Annual new growth of at least 31 cm (12 in) is typical.

The leaf texture is coriaceous, while the leaves are stiff, somewhat keeled and slightly curved. They are oval, with the largest leaves up to 7.7 cm (3.0 in) long and 4.0 cm (1.6 in) wide. The bases are rounded to acute. In side view, the leaf margins are slightly sinuate. In top view, the margins are spinose, typically with 4-6 spines per side. Apices are acuminate, with a sharp tip spine of 1-2 mm (0.04-0.08 in). Petioles are 9 mm (0.35 in) long. Upper leaf surfaces of mature leaves are dark green, Green Group N137A, while lower leaf surfaces are dull green, Green Group 143A (Royal Horticultural Society Colour Chart, 2007).

The plant produces pistillate flowers on the current season's growth, in late spring as is typical for other *Ilex opaca* in that region. After flowering, the pistils enlarge to form globose drupes, 9 mm (0.35 in) in diameter and 9 mm (0.35 in) long, maturing to bright red, Red Group 42A. Fruits are borne singly on peduncles up to 11 mm (0.43 in), and in abundance. Significantly, these appear glossier than is typical of the species.

Propagation may be accomplished from semi-hardwood cuttings in late summer at ambient temperature, or in November with bottom heat. Plants of 'Suzanne', and cutting wood, have been available from the originator William Cannon. Hardiness has been established in Zone 7, but can reasonably be expected to extend to Zone 6a/5b, as is typical of the species.

'Suzanne' was selected for its dark green leaves and abundant, unusually glossy red fruit.

The standard specimen is deposited in the herbarium of the U.S. National Arboretum (NA) in Washington, D.C. 20002.

Ilex opaca 'Suzanne' fruiting, January 8, 2023.



Jim Resch



Ilex opaca 'Suzanne' January 8, 2023.

Ilex opaca 'Suzanne' typical leaf,
January 8, 2023.





Ilex opaca 'Suzanne' voucher specimen, January 16, 2023.