TAGAWA gardens

New Mexico Privet

Forestiera neomexicana



New Mexico Privet
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 18 feet

Spread: 12 feet

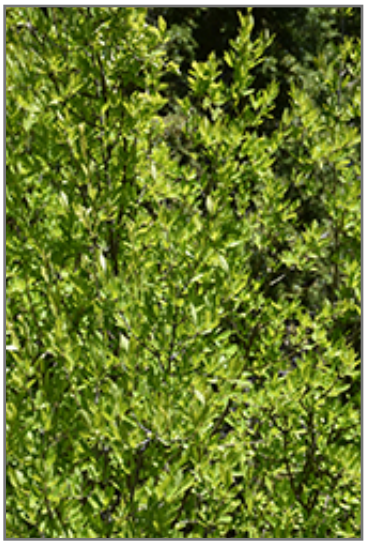
Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 4

Other Names: Desert Olive, New Mexico Olive, Wild Olive

Description:

This large, airy shrub has an upward habit of growth, presenting small oval leaves with glowing yellow fall color; may be pruned and maintained as a small tree or hedge; highly adaptable, very drought tolerant, and can be used for xeriscaping



New Mexico Privet foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Ornamental Features

New Mexico Privet features unusual clusters of lightly-scented yellow flowers along the branches from early to mid spring before the leaves. It has green deciduous foliage which emerges chartreuse in spring. The small glossy oval leaves turn an outstanding yellow in the fall. It produces steel blue berries from late summer to early fall, which fade to black over time. The fruit can be messy if allowed to drop on the lawn or walkways, and may require occasional clean-up. The smooth silver bark is extremely showy and adds significant winter interest.

Landscape Attributes

New Mexico Privet is a multi-stemmed deciduous shrub with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other landscape plants with less refined foliage.

This shrub will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and is best pruned in late winter once the threat of extreme cold has passed. It is a good choice for attracting birds and bees to your yard. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Suckering

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New Mexico Privet is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Mass Planting
- Hedges/Screening
- General Garden Use
- Naturalizing And Woodland Gardens

Planting & Growing

New Mexico Privet will grow to be about 18 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 12 feet. It tends to be a little leggy, with a typical clearance of 2 feet from the ground, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 30 years. This is a dioecious species, meaning that individual plants are either male or female. Only the females will produce fruit, and a male variety of the same species is required nearby as a pollinator.

This shrub does best in full sun to partial shade. It prefers dry to average moisture levels with very well-drained soil, and will often die in standing water. It is considered to be drought-tolerant, and thus makes an ideal choice for xeriscaping or the moisture-conserving landscape. This plant will benefit from an application of bonemeal and/or mycorrhizal fertilizer at the time of planting. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. This species is native to parts of North America. It can be propagated by cuttings.