



Drooping Leucothoe (*Leucothoe fontanesiana*)

Alex X. Niemiera, Professor, School of Plant and Environmental Sciences, Virginia Tech

Summary

Foliage: Evergreen broadleaf

Height: 6 feet

Spread: 6 feet

Shape: Mound with arching branches

Drooping leucothoe is a beautiful and graceful evergreen medium-sized shrub with lustrous, dark green foliage. White bell-shaped flowers bloom in the spring. Its arching branches give it a fountain-like effect. This plant is not suitable for sunny or dry locations.

Plant Needs

Zone: 5 to 8

Light: Partial shade

Moisture: Wet or moist

Soil Type: Sandy, loam, or clay loam

pH Range: 3.7 to 5.5

Functions

Suggested uses for this plant include border, naturalizing, and screen.

Planting Notes

Prefers acid and well drained soil.

Plant in a shady location protected from winter wind.

Does not tolerate drought. Water thoroughly each week during hot, dry weather.

Care

Occasional pruning can be done after spring flowering. Remove the oldest stems at ground level as needed.

Problems

Leaf spot and various fungi can be a problem.

Alternatives

Consult local garden centers historic or public gardens and arboreta regarding cultivars and related species that grow well in your area.

Cultivars of *Leucothoe fontanesiana*:

'Scarletta' has beautiful, shiny, dark green foliage that becomes a deep, plum-purple color in cold weather. This cultivar is subject to leaf spot.

'Girard's Rainbow' has new foliage that emerges white, pink, and copper; these colors fade with time.

Comments

Drooping leucothoe is a slow-growing plant with spreading, arching branches. It grows best in cool, shady, moist environments.

This material was developed by Carol Ness as part of the Interactive Design and Development Project funded by the Kellogg Foundation.

