

# Mountain Laurel (*Sophora secundiflora*)

**Native Range:** Central and West Texas

**Sun/Shade:** Sun or shade but prefers at least part-sun

**Flowers:** Beautiful well-known grape scented bluish-purple and white clusters in early spring only.

**Landscape Use:** Some plants are used frequently in landscaping for good reason. Mountain Laurel is beautiful, dependable and very drought tolerant, a proven performer. It looks good with or without irrigation, though it grows much faster with good soil and occasional watering. Mountain Laurels have gotten a bad rap for being very slow, but any plant, planted out in the middle of the Hill Country, with no supplemental water, would certainly not grow very fast either, if at all. Reliable evidence proves that Mountain Laurels can grow twice as fast with good soil and water. Mountain Laurels are a wiser large shrub choice than Red Tip Photinias because they always keep their dark rich color, whereas Red Tip Photinia leaves can become chlorotic, to the point of becoming white instead of red! Can be used as an individual specimen, hedge, shrub or small ornamental tree. Makes an excellent privacy plant. Lives long and gets more majestic with time.

**Container Use:** Have been used successfully in large containers.

**Size:** 15 feet tall by 10 feet wide.

**Type:** Evergreen small ornamental tree or large shrub determined by trimming technique chosen.

**Deer Resistance:** Very Deer Resistant.

**Drought Tolerance:** Very drought tolerant

**Soil:** Not particular about soil as long as it drains well and does not remain constantly wet. Does well in rocky soil or even better with soil enhancement.

**Water:** Smart Watering Principle=Water well when first planted then allow to dry slightly, without wilting, then water deeply again, etc. Do not keep constantly wet.

**Fertilizer:** Looks even better with regular fertilization.

**Maintenance Tips:** The best look for Mountain Laurels seems to be the multi-trunk tree effect. They can also be trimmed into smaller more formal shapes or trimmed as a hedge. Left alone they will grow into a large bush and tend to grow more broad than upright.

**Rating:** Rates high as a landscape plant.

**Pictures:** See the plant picture book in the appropriate section.