

## Coast Leucothoe (*Leucothoe axillaris*)

2-4' x 3-6', slowly spreading colonies.  
Spreading fountain-like branches.

Native VA south. Found in lowland areas  
by swamps, streamsides, and coastal plains.

2-4" slender glossy leathery pointed  
evergreen leaves, cascading on shiny  
zigzag stems. They emerge a rich copper,  
become glossy green, then  
maroons and red-purples in winter.

Leaves are arranged in two ranks along  
the stems, and have a textural  
effect like large ferns or Solomon's Seal.

Masses of white dangling-bell April-May  
flowers with a honey fragrance, hanging in  
drooping 1-3" clusters.

In fall, clusters of dangling green flower  
buds appear.

Each year new shoots arch up, grow rapidly,  
and thicken the cover of leaves.

Part sun (some morning sun preferred)  
to full shade.  
Moist well-drained acidic humusy soil,  
tolerates moderately dry soil. Protect from  
winter wind and drought, likes winter mulch.  
Cultural needs similar to Rhododendrons.  
Tolerates occasional hard pruning after  
flowering, or in winter.

Tall groundcover, undergrowth, massing,  
screening, for woodlands, borders, slopes,  
shady banks, foundations. Good for hiding  
leggy plants, and for bank stabilization.

Very attractive to bees, especially  
bumblebees.

Provides shelter to wildlife.

Photos 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 9, 10:

North Central Conservation District  
Photos 4, 8: by kenpei

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Photo 6: Missouri Botanic PlantFinder  
[mobot.org/gardeninghelp/plantfinder](http://mobot.org/gardeninghelp/plantfinder)

Photo 11: Will Cook, Duke University  
[duke.edu/~cwcook/trees/leax.html](http://duke.edu/~cwcook/trees/leax.html)

