



# Yews

(*Taxus Spp.*)

## Where Should Yews Be Planted?

Yews are very popular in residential and commercial landscapes across Idaho and the US. They are attractive, evergreen shrubs or small trees with bright red, berry-like fruits. They are easy to prune and easy to grow, tolerating shade and a variety of soil types. There are several different species of yews including the Japanese Yew, Canadian Yew and the European Yew. They are, however recognized as toxic to animals.

As the number of people living in and adjacent to wildlands grow, the likelihood of wildlife coming in to those areas increase. The concept of Right Plant in the Right Place is to choose plants that are well suited to specific locations. While the right place for a yew may be in a development within a city where wildlife is not present, it should not be planted if you live on an open hillside or any other wildlife urban interface area.

During the 2016/2017 winter many big game animals died in Idaho from ingesting Yew plants. As a result, the INLA, ISDA and other concerned parties are working on an educational approach to raise awareness of the plants toxicity to prevent more issues in the future.

Here's what you need to know:

- Over 100 big game animals perished in Idaho last winter by ingesting Yew plants, mostly due to the extensive amount of snow received and the lack of food available. Previous years showed diminutive deaths associated with yews.
- A petition was presented to initiate rulemaking to include Yews on Idaho's Noxious Weed List which would prevent the selling, installing and possession of Yew plants on private and public property in Idaho
- The informal negotiated rulemaking process came to a conclusion and the agency decided not to proceed. The issue of Yews and Idaho Wildlife remains controversial



## Responsibility of Horticulture Industry in Idaho

As Horticulture professionals it is your job to educate yourselves on Yews and take responsibility for sharing the information you have with others. See the list below for more information on how you can help.

- Learn and understand Yew plants and Yew toxicity
- Don't install Yew plants in known big game corridors, wintering grounds or areas inhabited by deer, elk or antelope
- Remove existing Yew plants in known big game corridors, wintering grounds or areas inhabited by deer, elk or antelope
- Wrap Yews with burlap in the winter (see picture above) when removal is not an option
- Inform your clients about responsible Yew plant ownership

For more information please contact the Idaho Nursery & Landscape Association:  
Phone: (208)681-4769 Website: [www.inlagrow.org](http://www.inlagrow.org)

