

Frost Bright®

Cherry Laurel, *Prunus caroliniana*

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Frost Bright® cherry laurel is an evergreen shrub or small tree, with dense branching and foliage. Leaves emerge light green with areas of pinkish, slowly transitioning to light green then dark green with a glossy upper surface. Leaves emerge in spring and remain on the plant a full year, finally dropping with new growth the following season. To date Frost Bright® has produced no flowers or fruits.

With pruning or shearing, secondary branches emerge quickly forming a dense hedge. Frost Bright® makes an effective visual screen but in addition, because of the broad flat leaves, research has shown that it effectively reduces noise during all seasons.

Frost Bright® was selected from a multi-generational seedling population of cherry laurel exposed to an unusual cold temperature of -18 F, yet unlike a large number of siblings Frost Bright® survived unscathed. Many of the seedlings in the breeding / selection program were killed by the severe cold, while others were severely damaged and lost most or all of their leaves and some branch tips. Frost Bright® cherry laurel is very drought tolerant, but will

grow in most soils with moderate to good drainage, but will quickly announce displeasure with poor drainage or over watering by turning brown.

Browsing by deer is minimal, likely due to the bitter taste. Likewise, insects are rarely a problem, even grasshoppers tend to feed only briefly then move on. Shot Hole disease, a major problem with *Prunus laurocerasus*, English laurel has not been observed on Frost Bright®.

Cherry laurel is native to the southeastern USA over a wide range. It was added to the Lacebark breeding program in 1988 starting with seeds collected in Northern Virginia. Eight generations later, a severe winter killed all of the seedlings except three. One of these three is the parent of Frost Bright®.

