

Rabbiteye Blueberry Cultivars/*Vaccinium virgatum* (Syn. *Vaccinium ashei*) cultivars. Family: Heath/*Ericaceae*

Characteristics: Rabbiteye Blueberry cultivars are similar in many ways to Highbush blueberries but are more adapted to cultivation in the southern states. They were developed from native southern *Vaccinium* species, mainly of the Coastal Plain. Many selections with superior fruiting characteristics have been made. The foliage is blue-green and attractive. They begin blooming in late March in the Piedmont but earlier in the Coastal Plain. They make outstanding landscape shrubs that produce delicious fruit. Their growth habit is similar to that of the Southern Highbush Blueberry (*V. corymbosum*), one of the species that went into their development.

Use Rabbiteye Blueberries as fruiting plants or in sunny shrub borders. They prefer full sun to light shade and should have a minimum of 8 hours of sun per day. During growing season they need about 1” of water per week.

Size: 6 to 8 feet tall and 4 to 5 wide at full maturity, depending on whether or not root suckers are pruned.

Zones: 7a, 7b, 8a, 8b

Habitat: Acid, well-drained soils enriched with organic matter.

Comments: Many cultivars are available. For good cross pollination, plant two or more cultivars. Check with Georgia Cooperative Extension for a list of the best plants for your area. The main pollinator for many native species is the Southeastern Blueberry Bee, which starts flying when the earliest native blueberries begin blooming.



Photo: Gary Wade



The most important thing to remember about starting rabbiteye blueberries is to plant more than one variety for cross-pollination. Cross-pollination is necessary for fruit set but also makes bigger berries!

Early Season	Mid-season	Late Season
Austin	Bluebelle	Baldwin
Brightwell	Briteblue	Centurion
Climax	Chaucer	Choice
Premier	Powderblue	Delite
Woodard	Tifblue	