



## American Hazelnut - *Corylus americana*

**Description:** American hazelnut has long been valued as an ornamental and for planting in naturalized settings. It grows in sun or partial shade and is useful for borders because of its colonial tendency. The leaves turn orange to red or purple in the fall. Native shrubs grow 1-3(-4) meters tall. The nuts are sweet and may be eaten raw or ground into flour for cake-like bread. Plants of American hazelnut may begin producing seed after the first year and produce good seed crops every 2-3 years.



**Leaf:** Alternate, simple, with a doubly serrated margin, broadly oval with a heart-shaped or rounded base, dark green above and paler below, 2 1/2 to 5 inches in length, petiole with stiff, glandular hairs.

**Flower:** Monoecious; males are light brown catkins (1 to 3 inch long) in clusters of two or three near branch tips, opening before leaves; females are inconspicuous with only bright red stigma and styles protruding from the otherwise gray-brown buds, appearing as short, thin, red threads, early spring.

**Fruit:** Edible brown nuts (1/2 inch diameter) enclosed in a hairy, leaf-like husk with ragged edges; initially green, ripening to a brown in late summer.

**Twig:** Slender, zigzag, light brown, with numerous stiff, red-glandular hairs; buds blunt, small with few scales, two-toned, light grayish brown with scales near base being darker brown.

**Bark:** Light grayish brown and smooth, later develops a mild criss-cross netted pattern

**Form:** Small shrub, often in clumps reaching 12 feet in height.

### Site requirements:

American hazelnut occurs in moist to dry woods and thickets, forest margins, roadsides, and fencerows and other disturbed areas. It grows best on rich, moist, well-drained soils but often may be found close to streamsides and also grows on prairies. Open habitats are common, but it also can grow successfully in deep shade.

**Native Range:** Zone 4-8

AL, AR, CT, DC, DE, GA, IA, IL, IN, KS, KY, LA, MA, MD, ME, MI, MN, MO, MS, NC, ND, NE, NH, NJ, NY, OH, OK, PA, RI, SC, SD, TN, VA, VT, WI, WV

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