

From Friends of the Arboretum Native Plant Sale

(UWMadison Arboretum)

Corylus americana - American Hazelnut

COMMON NAME: American Hazelnut, Filbert

SCIENTIFIC NAME: *Corylus americana* - Greek: "korpuz" = helmet, for the involucre or bracts surrounding the fruit.

FLOWER: Monocious. The male (sterile) flowers are drooping catkins. The female (fertile) flowers are tiny, red and star-like produced from scaly buds and clustered at tips of branches.

BLOOMING PERIOD: March-April

SIZE: Large, thicket-forming deciduous shrub from 3-10 feet tall.

BEHAVIOR: Leaves appear after spring bloom. Forms clumps with the roots close to the surface.

SITE REQUIREMENTS: Tolerates open shade and dry, somewhat disturbed sites. Does best in some sunlight.

NATURAL RANGE: Maine to Saskatchewan, south to Georgia, Missouri and Oklahoma.

SPECIAL FEATURES: One of the first plants to bloom in spring. Twigs are hairy. Leaves are 2-5 inches, double-toothed, hairy, on alternate branches. It has a lovely fall color when planted in sunlight. The nuts are edible for humans but sought after by small animals. Expect a good seed crop every 2-3 years.

SUGGESTED CARE: Easily grown. Protect from rabbits with a fence.

COMPANION PLANTS: Grey dogwood, black cherry, white ash, shagbark hickory, red and black oak, wild geranium, agrimony, hog peanut, strawberry, Solomon's plume.

Notes: Hazelnuts are not self-pollinating and require more than one plant to ensure cross pollination to produce nuts. They're wind pollinated so hazelnuts plants need to be within 50' of each other. Hazelnuts do well in sun to part shade but if they get too much shade they'll grow tall and spindly. If this is the case, cut back the shrub to produce new growth. Nuts are typically produced on plants that are 2-3 years old and will ripen September to October. Hazelnuts are usually gobbled up by critters but if you want to get the jump on them, pick hazelnuts when the nuts are beginning to turn brown but the leaves around them are still green. After you pick them, remove the husk and then lay them out on a screen for good aeration. Place them in a warm dry place and stir them around every day. They should be dried in about 2-4 weeks.