Plant Profiles: HORT 2242 Landscape Plants II

Botanical Name: Corylus americana

Common Name: American hazelnut, American filbert

Family Name: Betulaceae – birch family

General Description: *Corylus americana* is a large, deciduous, thicket forming shrub. It is native to the Chicago area where it can be found growing in prairies, savannas, dry woodland edges and fencerows. The dense thicket provides habitat for wildlife and the filberts (also called hazelnuts) are a prized food source for a variety of animals. American filberts are also edible to humans, but the critters seem to get them first! Connor Shaw, of Possibility Place Nursery, recommends having at least three plants for good nut production and harvesting by September 1 to gather the nuts before the animals eat them. As an ornamental, American filbert grows in sun or partial shade in average soils. Due to its large size and somewhat unruly habit it is often suggested for use in a naturalized landscape.

Zone: (3)4-9

Resources Consulted:

"Corylus americana". Possibility Place Nursery. 2014. Web. 9 March 2014.

Dirr, Michael A. Manual of Woody Landscape Plants: Their Identification, Ornamental Characteristics, Culture, *Propagation and Uses.* Champaign: Stipes, 2009. Print.

"The PLANTS Database." *USDA, NRCS*. National Plant Data Team, Greensboro, NC 27401-4901 USA, 2014. Web. 17 Mar. 2014.

Swink, Floyd, and Gerould Wilhelm. *Plants of the Chicago Region*. Indianapolis: Indiana Academy of Science, 1994. Print.

Creator: Julia Fitzpatrick-Cooper, Professor, College of DuPage

Creation Date: 2014

Keywords/Tags: Betulaceae, Corylus americana, hazel, hazelnut, filbert, deciduous, shrub



Whole plant/Habit:

- Description: Corylus americana is a large, coarse shrub. It can grow 15-18 feet under favorable conditions with the spread averaging two-thirds the height.
- Image Source: Karren Wcisel, TreeTopics.com
- Image Date: July 1, 2008
- Image File Name: american_hazelnut_1763.png



Whole plant/Habit:

- Description: American filbert has a suckering, leggy habit.
- Image Source: Karren Wcisel, TreeTopics.com
- Image Date: October 12, 2010
- Image File Name: american_hazelnut_1210539.png

Bark:

- Description: The multiple stems tend to have thin, silvery to brownish bark. The bark is not an important identification feature.
- Image Source: Karren Wcisel, TreeTopics.com
- Image Date: February 7, 2009
- Image File Name: american_hazelnut_1110037.png



Branch/Twig:

- Description: The slender twigs are alternate with a zig-zag appearance. The branches are long, straight and branched toward the tip.
- Image Source: Karren Wcisel, TreeTopics.com
- Image Date: Feb 3, 2008
- Image File Name: american_hazelnut_0289.png





Flower:

- Description: Plants in the genus *Corylus* are monoecious. They produce separate male and female flowers on the same plant. The catkins are fully formed by autumn but will not open until late winter or early spring. The female flowers (on left in this image) are inconspicuous, consisting of only the red styles of the pistils protruding from the bud scales. The male catkins (on right in this image) are pendulous, elongate and visible during winter.
- NOTE: The images in this photo are of *Corylus americana*.
- Image Source: Karren Wcisel, TreeTopics.com
- Image Date: March 31, 2011
- Image File Name: american_hazlenut_1270466s.png

Flower:

- Description: The male catkins are numerous, usually in clusters of 2 or 3, and produced near branch tips.
 In early spring the brown catkins elongate and turn yellow with pollen. This is a welcome site, a harbinger of spring!
- Image Source: Karren Wcisel, TreeTopics.com
- Image Date: March 13, 2012
- Image File Name: american_hazlenut_1350021.png

Fruit:

- Description: The fruit is a nut enclosed within two leafy-like bracts (also referred to as involucres).
- Image Source: Karren Wcisel, TreeTopics.com
- Image Date: July 1, 2008
- Image File Name: american_hazelnut_1754.png



Fruit:

- Description: Corylus americana involucral bracts are downy with deeply notched, jagged edges. This image shows a cluster of nuts surrounded by the involucral bracts.
- Image Source: Karren Wcisel, TreeTopics.com
- Image Date: July 14, 2008
- Image File Name: american_hazelnut_2796.png

Fruit:

- Description: Notice the acorn-like nut forming within the bracts. The nut matures September through October.
- Image Source: Karren Wcisel, TreeTopics.com
- Image Date: July 16, 2008
- Image File Name: american_hazelnut_2856.png



Leaf:

- Description: *Corylus americana* has deciduous, alternate, simple leaves. The dark green leaves are rounded or heart-shaped at the base with an acuminate (tapering to a point) leaf tip.
- Image Source: Karren Wcisel, TreeTopics.com
- Image Date: July 1, 2008
- Image File Name: american_hazelnut_1755.png



Leaf:

- Description: The underside of the leaf is softly pubescent with doubly-serrate coarse teeth on the leaf margin.
- Image Source: Karren Wcisel, TreeTopics.com
- Image Date: July 1, 2008
- Image File Name: american_hazelnut_1754b.png

Leaf:

- Description: In autumn the leaves turn an attractive red, orange or yellow color.
- Image Source: Karren Wcisel, TreeTopics.com
- Image Date: October 26, 2008
- Image File Name: american_hazelnut_1060721.png

Winter interest:

- Description: Winter interest for American filbert is in the eye of the beholder! For some the colonizing, multi-stem habit serves as a natural looking screen and a welcome habitat for wildlife. Others may not appreciate the size and unruly habit which is even more accentuated by the twiggy bare stems of winter.
- Image Source: Karren Wcisel, TreeTopics.com
- Image Date: February 7, 2009
- Image File Name: american_hazelnut_1110033.png



Special ID feature(s):

- Description: The light brown catkins, fall color and thicket forming habit will serve as the best identification features for *Corylus americana*.
- Image Source: Karren Wcisel, TreeTopics.com
- Image Date: October 20, 2007
- Image File Name: american_hazelnut_2484.png