



DEEPLY ROOTED

the extraordinary benefits of trees

American Hazelnut *Corylus americana*



Native Range

Eastern and Southern North America

Description

The hazelnut is a large multi-stemmed shrub or small tree, if pruned around the one central stem. The fruit of the hazelnut grows in clusters of one to five nuts, each protected by a leafy husk. Harvesting can be done while the husks are still green—once they turn tan, competition with the local wildlife will increase. In late winter, a profusion of yellow male catkins and smaller, red-centered clusters of female flowers appear on the same tree, giving visual interest before the tree leafs out. (A catkin is a slim, cylindrical flower cluster.) Nuts are typically produced on plants that are two to three years old and older.

Pollination

Hazelnut pollen is transferred through the wind and not by insects. Trees should be planted near each other, as pollen from another hazelnut tree is needed for the flowers to produce nuts in the fall. In addition, the flowers provide food for pollinators

Environmental Benefits

These attractive flowering trees or shrubs become valuable food sources for birds and small mammals, making your landscape into a miniature wildlife preserve. The nuts are eaten by songbirds, wild turkeys, chipmunks, black bears, foxes, white-tailed deer, skunks, and squirrels. The hazelnut is also the host plant for caterpillars of the *Saturniidae* family of moths. Hazelnuts also sequester more carbon than annual crops, reduce soil erosion, and filter pollutants from groundwater

Environmental Concerns

This plant can be visited by insects such as Japanese beetles, scale, leaf hoppers, and various foliage-eating caterpillars. The hazelnut has occasional problems with diseases such as leaf spots, blight, and crown gall. It is not salt tolerant.

History

Cultivated in the US since the late 1700s, the common name is derived from "hazel," which is an old English name for filbert. *Corylus* comes from the Greek word "korus," which means helmet, referring to the shape of the hard nut shells.

Size

At maturity, height of 8' to 12' with a crown spread of 10' to 15'.

Ease of Tree Care

Hazelnuts can be pruned at any time of year. They can thrive despite tough soil, drought, and other harsh growing conditions, and they require no pesticides.

Where to Plant

Full sun to part shade—it is a great choice for shaded areas; however, for the best nut production, the plant should be grown in full sun. Plant at least two trees at the same time to ensure pollination.