UNIVERSITY OF
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Cooperative Extension Service
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

Corylus americana[1]

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Introduction

Native to moist areas of the eastern U.S., American Filbert goes unnoticed until the bright orange fall color brings the woods to life (Fig. 1). Plants grow no taller than about 12 feet, but can reach higher in a shaded location. The nuts are most attractive to wildlife, especially squirrels. Once they discover the fruit on a shrub, they can strip it in a day.

General Information

Scientific name: *Corylus americana*
Pronunciation: KOR-rill-us uh-mair-rick-KAY-nuh
Common name(s): American Filbert
Family: *Betulaceae*
Plant type: shrub
USDA hardiness zones: 5 through 9 (Fig. 2)
Planting month for zone 7: year round
Planting month for zone 8: year round
Planting month for zone 9: year round
Origin: native to North America
Uses: hedge; border; mass planting; screen
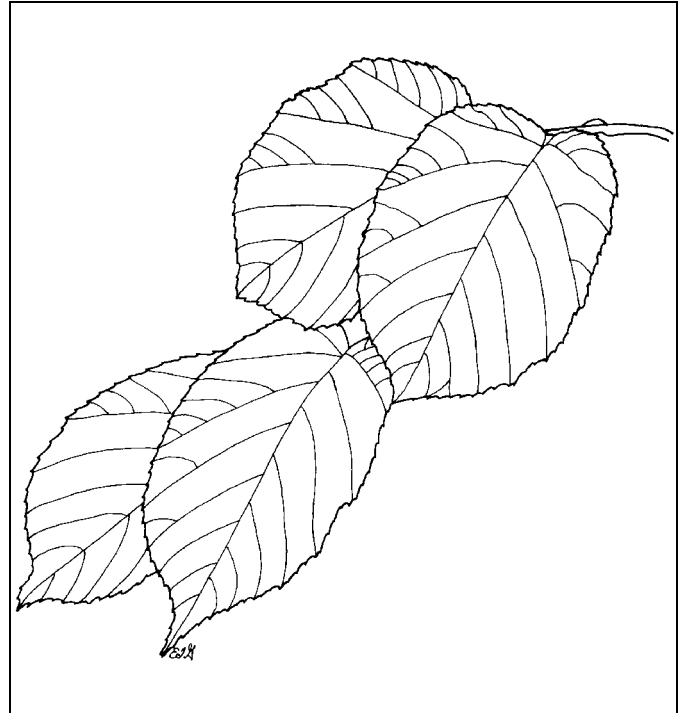**Availablity:** grown in small quantities by a small number of nurseries

Description

Height: 8 to 15 feet
Spread: 8 to 12 feet
Plant habit: round
Plant density: moderate
Growth rate: moderate

Figure 1. American Filbert.

Texture: coarse

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: alternate
Leaf type: simple
Leaf margin: serrate
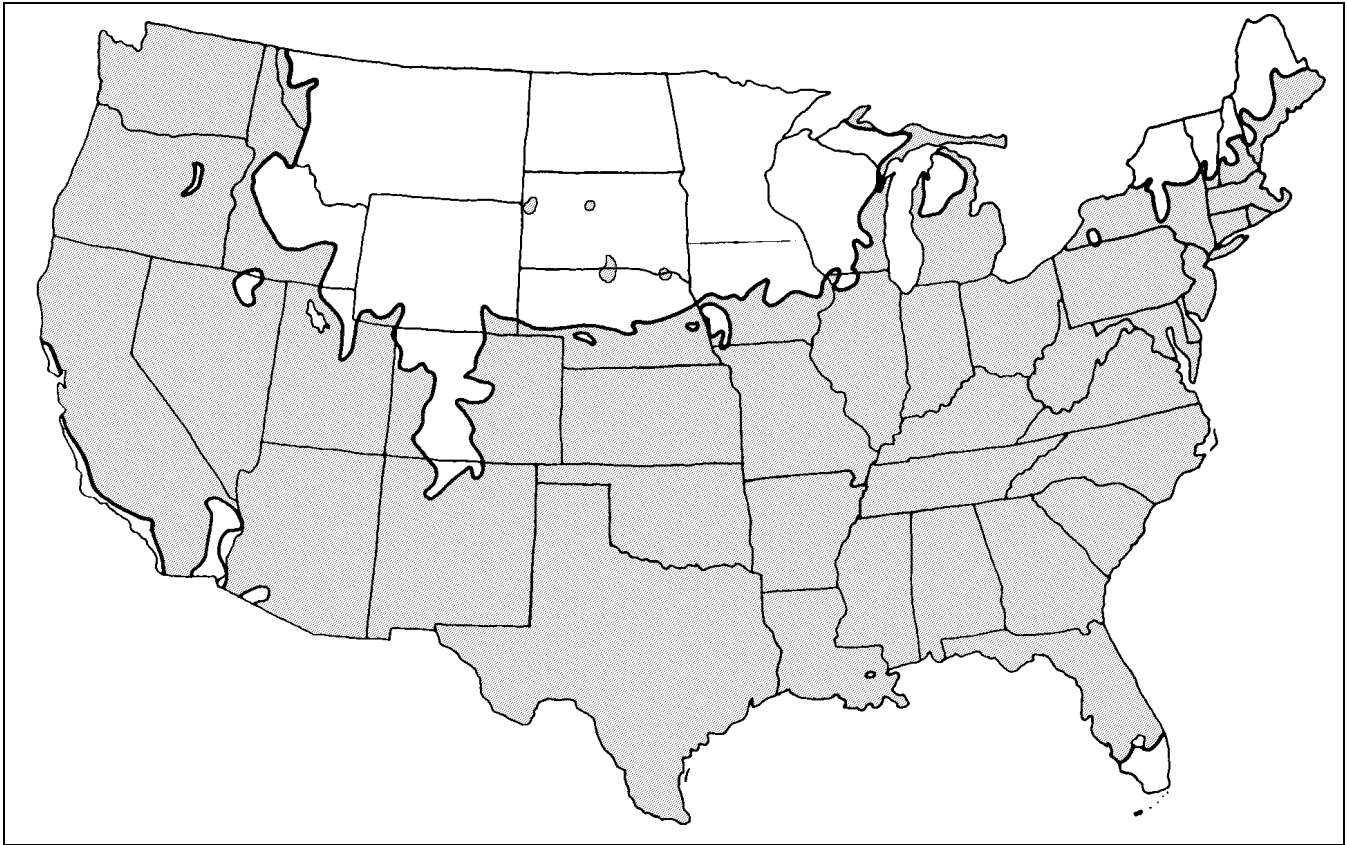**Leaf shape:** ovate

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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Leaf venation: pinnate
Leaf type and persistence: deciduous
Leaf blade length: 4 to 8 inches
Leaf color: green
Fall color: yellow; orange
Fall characteristic: showy

Flower

Flower color: brown
Flower characteristic: spring flowering

Fruit

Fruit shape: irregular
Fruit length: .5 to 1 inch
Fruit cover: dry or hard
Fruit color: brown
Fruit characteristic: attracts birds

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: typically multi-trunked or clumping stems; not particularly showy
Current year stem/twig color: brown

Current year stem/twig thickness: thin

Culture

Light requirement: plant grows in part shade/part sun
Soil tolerances: acidic; alkaline; sand; loam; clay;
Drought tolerance: high
Soil salt tolerances: unknown
Plant spacing: 36 to 60 inches

Other

Roots: sprouts from roots or lower trunk
Winter interest: no special winter interest
Outstanding plant: not particularly outstanding
Invasive potential: aggressive, spreading plant
Pest resistance: long-term health usually not affected by pests

Use and Management

American Filbert is not readily available in nurseries but when found can be planted in a shaded woodland setting to add color and fruit in the fall. It makes a nice surprise in the shrub border since it goes unnoticed forming a green mass most of the year. It can also be planted along the foundation of a commercial building to soften the corners. It grows too tall for planting near a private home.

Provide moisture until the plant is established. Once established, it will survive and grow with little or no irrigation provided it is located in a moist area. It is as near to maintenance free as any plant.

Pests and Diseases

No pests or diseases are normally seen on this plant.