



Cooperative Extension Service
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

***Corylus avellana* ‘Contorta’¹**

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Introduction

A curious shrub with twisted stems and branches, Walkingstick slowly develops into a nice, rounded form (Fig. 1). Branches grow upright when the plant is young, but eventually droop toward the ground. Flowers emerge and hang from bare stems before the foliage appears in the spring. Fruit is persistent and enjoyed by birds, rodents and humans.

General Information

Scientific name: *Corylus avellana* ‘Contorta’

Pronunciation: KOR-rill-us av-vell-LAY-nuh

Common name(s): Contorted European Filbert, Henry Lauder’s Walkingstick

Family: *Betulaceae*

Plant type: shrub

USDA hardiness zones: 4B through 8 (Fig. 2)

Planting month for zone 7: year round

Planting month for zone 8: year round

Origin: not native to North America

Uses: border; container or above-ground planter; accent; cut foliage/twigs

Availability: somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the plant

Description

Height: 5 to 10 feet

Spread: 8 to 12 feet

Plant habit: round

Plant density: moderate

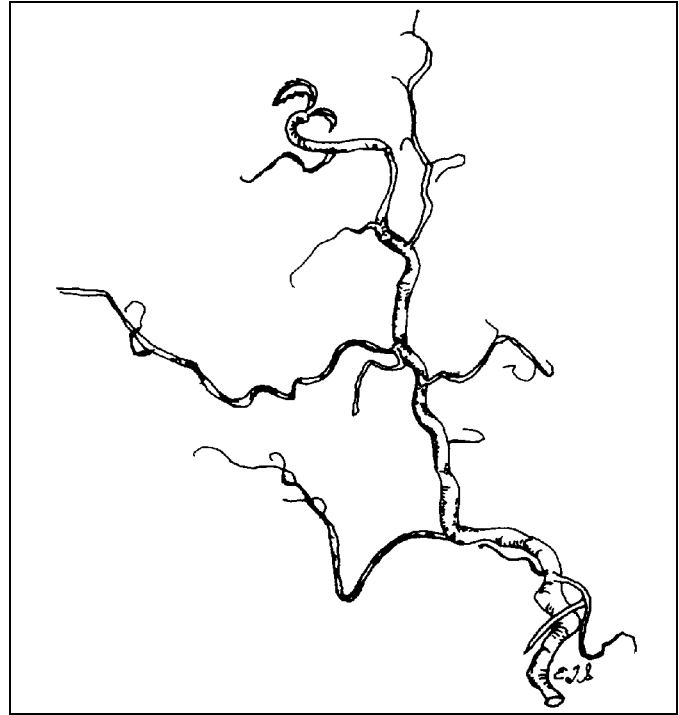


Figure 1. Contorted European Filbert.

Growth rate: slow

Texture: medium

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: alternate

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: serrate

1. This document is Fact Sheet FPS-147, one of a series of the Environmental Horticulture Department, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Publication date: October 1999. Please visit the EDIS web site at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>.
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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Leaf shape: orbiculate
Leaf venation: pinnate
Leaf type and persistence: deciduous
Leaf blade length: 2 to 4 inches
Leaf color: green
Fall color: yellow
Fall characteristic: showy

Flower

Flower color: brown
Flower characteristic: spring flowering

Fruit

Fruit shape: elongated
Fruit length: .5 to 1 inch
Fruit cover: dry or hard
Fruit color: brown
Fruit characteristic: suited for human consumption

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: showy; typically multi-trunked or clumping stems

Current year stem/twig color: brown
Current year stem/twig thickness: medium

Culture

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

Other

Roots: sprouts from roots or lower trunk
Winter interest: plant has winter interest due to unusual form, nice persistent fruits, showy winter trunk, or winter flowers
Outstanding plant: plant has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more
Invasive potential: not known to be invasive
Pest resistance: long-term health usually not affected by pests

Use and Management

Most people plant Walkingstick in a prominent location in the landscape so its unusual habit can be displayed. Place it in a mulched bed or in a mass of low ground cover so adjacent plants will not interfere with it. It can be used as the accent in any garden and is often placed near water, near a deck or patio so passers-by can enjoy it up close.

Pests and Diseases

A foliage and twig blight has been reported.