Corylus americana

Edward F. Gilman

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
Availability: 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
Texture: coarse
Foliage

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

Figure 1. American Filbert.

1. This document is Fact Sheet FPS-146, 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.

2. Edward F. Gilman, professor, Environmental Horticulture Department, Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville, 32611.
Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

**Leaf**
- **Venation**: pinnate
- **Type and Persistence**: deciduous
- **Length**: 4 to 8 inches
- **Color**: green
- **Fall Color**: yellow; orange
- **Fall Characteristic**: showy

**Flower**
- **Color**: brown
- **Characteristic**: spring flowering

**Fruit**
- **Shape**: irregular
- **Length**: .5 to 1 inch
- **Cover**: dry or hard
- **Color**: brown
- **Characteristic**: attracts birds

**Trunk and Branches**
- **Type**: typically multi-trunked or clumping
- **Color**: brown

**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

October 1999
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.