

COMMON WITCH-HAZEL

Hamamelis virginiana



Family:	Witch Hazel
Native to:	Eastern North America
Hardiness Zones:	3 to 8
Bloom Time:	October to December
Height:	10 to 20 feet
Spread:	10 to 20 feet



DECIDUOUS SHRUB

Winter Twig

Culture:

Easily grown in average, medium moisture, well-drained soils in full sun to part shade. Prefers moist, acidic, organically rich soils. Its bark is smooth and gray to gray-brown. In the fall, medium to dark green leaves turn to yellow, sometimes tinged with orange or red. Stem-hugging clusters of fragrant bright yellow flowers, each with four crinkly, ribbon-shaped petals, appear along the branches from October to December, usually after leaf drop or at the time of fall color. Fertilized flowers will form fruit over a long period extending through winter and into the following growing season. Fruits are greenish seed capsules that become woody with age and mature to light brown. Each seed capsule splits open in the fall of the following year, exploding the 1-2 black seeds.

Did You Know?

Flowers are pollinated by winter-flying noctuid moths. Wild turkeys eat the seeds of this plant. Native Americans and the early Puritans produced witch hazel extract by boiling the stems of the shrub and producing a syrup used to treat swellings, inflammations and tumors.

H. virginiana produces a specific kind of tannin which displays a specific cytotoxic activity against colon cancer cells.

Pond's Extract was a popular distillation of the bark in dilute alcohol.

The forked twigs of witch-hazel are preferred as divining rods.

Genus name comes from the Greek words *hama* meaning at same time and *melon* meaning apple or fruit in reference to the occurrence of both fruit and flowers at the same time.