

Corylus americana

[Synonyms : *Corylus americana* var. *altior*, *Corylus americana* var. *humilis*, *Corylus americana* var. *indehiscens*, *Corylus americana* var. *missourensis*, *Corylus calyculata*, *Corylus humilis*]

AMERICAN HAZEL is a deciduous shrub. Native to eastern North America it has yellow catkins.

It is also known as American corylus, American filbert, American hazelnut, *Amerikan findiği* (Turkish), *Amerikanische Hasel* (German), *Amerika no heezeru* (Japanese), *Amerikanpähkinäpensas* (Finnish), *Amerikansk hassel* (Danish, Spanish), Dwarf filbert, Filbert, *Hasselbuske* (Spanish), Hazelnut, *Huksik* (Winnebago North American Indian), *Korilo Amerika* (Esperanto), *Líska americká* (Czech), *Nocciuolo nano* (Italian), *Nocciuolo rostrato* (Italian), *Noisetier d'amerique* (French), *Uma* (Dakota North American Indian), *Uzhinga* (Omaha and Ponca North American Indian), Wild filbert, and Wild hazelnut.

Americana means ‘of or from America (North or South)’.

Some of the North American Indian tribes were familiar with the American hazel. Many, including the Dakota, Cherokee, Chippewa, Ponca, Menominee, Omaha, and Winnebago Indians harvested the nuts which were eaten fresh or stored for Winter soups. The Iroquois must not be left out as authorities note their diverse culinary uses for the nut apart from eating it fresh or in soup. For them it was a staple food and they not only made the nuts into bread, sauces and puddings but also prepared delicacies with them and used them to make a beverage.

Some of the North American Indian tribes also used American hazel in medicines. The Menominee added inner bark to medicines to enhance the other ingredients. Some of the Chippewa tribe applied it to cuts – and the Chippewa also used it for headaches. It offered diverse uses for the Cherokee Indians who not only prescribed it for teething babies and used it when it was necessary to cause vomiting, but also included it in treatments for hay fever and childbirth problems.

The nuts are a particular delicacy for chipmunks.

The seed oil has been used to ease toothache – and research in the United States at the turn of the 20th and 21st Centuries has isolated an anti-cancer drug in American hazel and other close relatives which would offer a more viable source than slower-growing yew trees (*Taxus* genus) from which it has been extracted to this point.