

Hamamelis virginiana

Witch Hazel

Although common throughout much of the Mid-Atlantic Region, in Virginia's Coastal Plain, Witch Hazel is infrequent but widespread. The last native shrub to bloom in autumn, its fragrant, spider-like flowers illuminate the landscape in pale yellow. Fruit matures the second season. The Virginia Native Plant Society named Witch Hazel as Wildflower of the Year in 2002.

Tried and True
Native Plant Selections
for the Mid-Atlantic



Shrub	Leaves, Fruit, Flowers, November Shrub
Height: 15–20 feet	
Spread: 15–20 feet	
Bloom Color: Yellow	
Characteristics	
Deciduous tall shrub or small tree with multi-stemmed clump or low branching form	
Medium green, broadly oval, scalloped leaves	
Four yellow, twisted ribbon-like petals cluster on upper branches Sept. to Dec. and calyxes persist	
Green capsules mature to brown the second season & explosively eject seeds when flowers next appear	
Yellow to pale orange fall foliage	
Spreads by seeds although suckers can form colony	
Attributes	
Tolerates heavy clay soil and erosion	
No serious pests (though Japanese beetles may munch leaves) or diseases; deer occasionally severely damage; rabbits browse on seedlings	
Medicinal uses	
Attracts flies & wasps; larval hosts to some moths	
Growing and Maintenance Tips	Excellent Replacement for
Soil Requirements: Average, well-drained	<i>Acer tataricum var. ginnala</i> - Amur Maple
Light Requirements: Sun, Partial Shade	<i>Elaeagnus umbellata</i> - Autumn Olive
Water Requirements: Moist	<i>Rhamnus cathartica</i> - Buckthorn
Protect from constant wind	
Remove suckers promptly to prevent spread; prune in early spring if needed	
Use as specimen, patio tree, or in a container	
Hardiness: USDA Zones 3–8	

developed by Master Gardeners of Northern Virginia, serving Arlington and Alexandria

Images by Elaine Mills (fruit), private garden, Arlington, Virginia and by Mary Free, Green Spring Gardens



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