

## hazelnut *Corylus americana*

Kingdom: Plantae

Division: Magnoliophyta

Class: Magnoliopsida

Order: Fagales

Family: Corylaceae

ILLINOIS STATUS common, native

### FEATURES

Hazelnut is also known as American filbert. This perennial shrub has leaves arranged alternately along the twigs. The simple, double-toothed leaves are oval in shape. Leaves turn yellow, orange and red in the fall of the year. The gray twigs and leafstalks are covered with hairs. Green male and female flowers are borne on the same plant. The male catkins are one to four inches in length and appear before the leaves begin to unfurl. Catkins persist on the tree through the winter. The female flowers lack petals. Clustered near the twig tips, the bright red, female flowers are one-fourth inch wide. The fruit is a nut. The bristly nut husk is open at one end. Fruiting begins at about age six years.

### BEHAVIORS

The hazelnut may be found throughout Illinois. It grows in moist prairies, fence rows, edges, dry woods and thickets. Flowers are produced in March and April. The seeds, leaves, stems and buds of this plant are eaten by wildlife. Hazelnut grows in small, shrubby groups because it sends up new plants from the roots. The flowers are pollinated by the wind.

### HABITATS

Aquatic Habitats

wet prairies and fens

Woodland Habitats

upland deciduous forests

Prairie and Edge Habitats

black soil prairie; edge; shrub prairie

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