

Common Name: **Filbert**

Genus: *Corylus*

Species: *avellana*

Family: Betulaceae

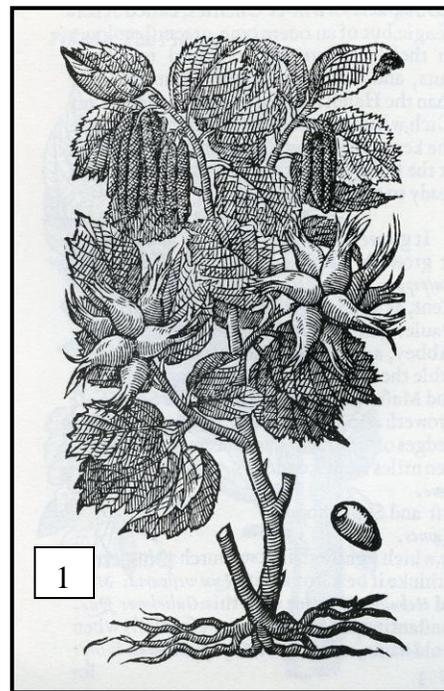
AKA: Hazel nut, Pontick nuts, Alder, Alnus



Historical Uses:

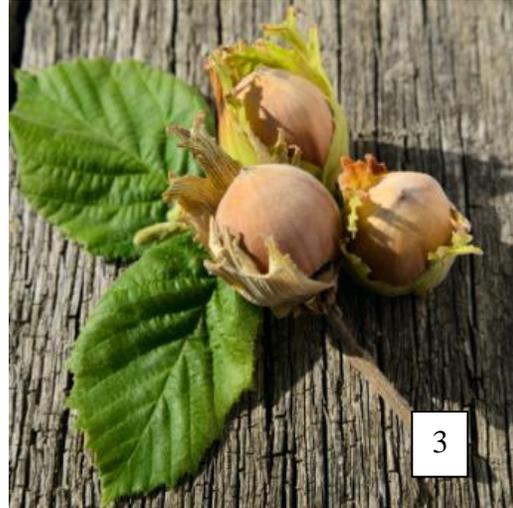
Medical: “But the Pontick nuts which somme call Leptocarya, (as we should say small nutts] are not for ye stomach, yet they being beaten small and drank with Melicrate, cure an old cough, and being roasted, and eaten with a little pepper they concoct a distillation, but being burnt whole, and beaten small with Axugia, or Bears grease, and anointed on, soe it restores ye haire that was fallen away by the Alopecia. Somme say that the shells being burnt, and beaten small together with oyle, doe make black the Pupillae of gray-eyed children, the forepart of the head being kept moistened therewith.” (1)

“Hasell Nuts (Hazel Nuts) newly gathered, and not as yet dry, containe in them a certaine superflous moisture, by reason whereof they are windie: not onely the new gathered Nuts, but the dry also, be very hard of digestion: for they are of an earty and cold essence, and of an hard and found substance, for



which cause also they very slowly passe thorow the belly, therefore they are troublesome and clogging to the stomacke, cause head-ache, especially when they be beaten in to greate quantitie. The kernels of Nuts made into milke like Almonds do mightily bind the belly, and are good for the laske and the bloody flux. The same doth coole exceedingly in hot fevers and burning agues. The catkins are cold and dry, and likewise binding: they also stay the lask. The kernels of the Nuts rather cause than cure the bloody flux and laks, wherefore they are not to be used such diseases.” (2)

“The parched kernels made into an electuary, or the milk drawn from the kernels with mead or honeyed water, are very good to help an old cough: and, being parched, and a little pepper added thereto, and taken in drink, digest the distillations of rheum from the head. The dried husks and shells, to the quantity of about two drachms, taken in red wine, stay the lasks, and women’s courses; but the Redskin which covers the kernel is much more effectual for the latter purpose.” (3)



Filbert fruit- see nuts below

“It is styptic, brings colds to a head augments the intellect, dyes the hair, eases the coughs of long duration, stops twisting pains in the guts and difficulty of urination, cures pains in the joints and sinews, heals snake and scorpion bites, and restores hair after alopecia. When its burnt shells are powdered in its oil, then anointed on the forehead they will darken the irises of gray-eyed children. However it generates hot, yellow bile, rousing all the choleric passions, causes gas and headaches (being difficult and slow of digestion), is sometimes emetic, and is costive in the bowels.” (4)

Household: “dyes the hair” (5)

Folklore/Astrology: “They are under the dominion of *Mercury*.” (6)

“The hazel is warm and dry and belongs to *Mercury*. It seems to have always borne a sacred character. A symbol of authority, it is consecrated to *Thor*, and the caduceus of *Mercury* is made of it, as were many scepters of kings. *Mercury* used it to civilize mankind, and made it an emblem of peace and commerce. After eating the forbidden fruit in Eden, *Eve* took shelter in a hazel: the shrub also concealed the Holy Family from pursuers on their flight in to Egypt. When *Joseph of Arimathea* built the first Christian church in England at Glastonbury, he made it out of wattled hazel boughs. In ancient



Close-up of Filbert leaves

Germany it signified immortality, for it was the first shrub to blossom at the end of winter. Priest bless its branches on Palm Sunday. It also stood for a happy marriage, since its nuts were always coupled. It had the power to frighten serpents, and *St. Patick* held a hazel rod when he cast the snakes out of Ireland. Pilgrims often bore hazel staffs which were later buried with them. It was considered to be a lightning rod in the Tyrol, and magicians wands were

made from it. It also forced witches to restore fertility to animals that they had made barren, and is the favorite dowsing rod of water diviners, as well as those seeking out treasure and mining sites. Hazel confers invisibility on its possessor, and a cross made of it cures the bites of adders. To dream of eating hazels foretells riches and contentment, and to dream of finding them means you will discover treasure.” (7)



Hazel nuts- size is similar to acorns from *Quercus rubra*

Cautions: “They very slowly pass through the belly, therefore they are troublesome and clogging to the stomach, cause head-ache, especially when they be eaten in too great a quantity.” (8)

Contemporary Uses:

Parts Used: Bark, fruits, leaves

Medicinal: “The leaves are sometimes smoked in Eurasia. It’s oil is a vasoconstrictor used in treating hemorrhage, phlebitis, and varicose ulcers, but otherwise has little use in medicine.” (9)

“An astringent, tonic herb that encourages healing of damaged tissues. “to control bleeding, and for rheumatism” “for throat, mouth and dental infections, wounds, and scabies” (10)

Other: “As a foodstuff, and lubricants, soap, perfume, and paint. The wood makes canes, and charcoal, and goes into building light aircraft and gliders.” (11)

Area of Origin: Southeastern Europe, Southwestern Asia

Physical description: Bushy tree with purple to gray-brown bark, pendent twigs, and obovate leaves

Plant type: Deciduous

Form: Shrub or tree

Height: 8-10’

Flower color: Yellowish brown

Flowering period: April

Soil type/requirements: Well drained

Fruit: Hazelnut

Hardiness zone: USDA 4-8

Sun requirements: Full sun to part shade

Propagation: “By seed sown in autumn or spring; by suckers detached in autumn; by hardwood cuttings in early winter. Trees may be coppiced to minimize damage from harvesting of bark.” (12)

Sources

1. Discorides, p. 88
2. Gerard, p. 1438-40
3. Culpepper, p. 71
4. Anderson, p. 92
5. Ibid
6. Culpepper p. 71
7. Anderson, p. 92
8. Gerard p. 1440
9. Anderson, p. 92
10. Bown p. 114-115
11. Anderson, p. 92
12. Bown p. 114-115

Illustrations/Images:

1. Gerards Herbal, 1597
2. <https://www.fast-growing-trees.com/Jefferson-Filbert-Hazelnut-Tree.htm>
3. <https://www.starkbros.com/products/nut-trees/filbert-hazelnut-trees>
4. https://oregonstate.edu/trees/broadleaf_genera/filbert_hazel.html
5. <http://ediblelandscaping.com/products/nuts/Filberts/>