

It is native of the gravelly river banks and beds of Missouri, Louisiana and Oklahoma and was introduced into cultivation by the Arboretum so recently as 1908. The Vernal Witch-Hazel has smaller flowers than the other species but is the most floriferous of all. The curiously jointed strap-shaped petals are contractile. It has blossomed in the Arboretum as early as January 6th and at any time during that month a warm spell of weather will cause the blossoms to open. If the temperature falls suddenly the petals contract and become infolded. On the appearance of mild weather they open and with falling temperature fold up again. It is rather interesting to watch the game of hide and seek the petals of this Witch-Hazel play with Jack Frost. The typical plant has light yellow petals, reddish towards the base. There is another form, not yet named, of which the petals are deeply suffused with reddish brown. Another variety, *tomentella*, has leaves more densely hairy and glaucescent on the under surface. For its abundance of blossom and its early flowering qualities this Witch-Hazel ought to be freely planted in the town gardens of New England. The flowers emit a delightful spicy odor of almonds.

**Hamamelis japonica.** This Japanese species is similar in habit to *H. virginiana* and grows to an even larger size, being sometimes 25 feet tall and as much in width. The flowers are larger and more abundantly produced than is usually the case in the common Witch-Hazel. They appear early in March. In the type the petals are clear yellow and the cupped sepals are usually purple on the inside. A variety named *arborea* is of tree-like habit with golden yellow petals, calyx deep purple on the inside and purple anthered stamens. Another variety, *Zuccariniana*, also of tree-like habit with the branches more ascending than in the type, has lemon-yellow petals and the calyx greenish yellow within. A third variety recently introduced from Japan and named *flavo-purpurascens* has more or less reddish brown petals but this is not of much garden value.

**Hamamelis mollis** is a Chinese species and the best of the family. It has larger flowers with broad petals, golden yellow except at the base which is reddish. The leaves are strongly veined and densely clothed with soft woolly hairs on the underside. It is native of the Yangtzse Valley region of east-central China, being common in open woods and thickets from the Hupeh province eastward. All the Witch-Hazels are hardy and may easily be propagated by grafting on *H. virginiana*.

These Bulletins will now be discontinued until April of next year.



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