



**American Hornbeam**  
*Carpinus caroliniana*

Height: 30 feet

Spread: 25 feet

Sunlight: ○ ● ●

Hardiness Zone: 3b

Other Names: Blue Beech, Ironwood, Musclemwood, Water Beech

**Description:**

A beautiful and underused native woodland tree; very interesting gray bark is almost muscular in appearance, makes a strong winter statement; excellent blend of yellow, orange and scarlet in fall, curious hop-like fruit;

**Ornamental Features**

The American Hornbeam has forest green foliage throughout the season. The pointy leaves turn an outstanding orange in the fall. The flowers are not ornamentally significant. It produces small clusters of tan hop-like fruit from early fall to late winter. The smooth silvery blue bark adds an interesting dimension to the landscape.

**Landscape Attributes**

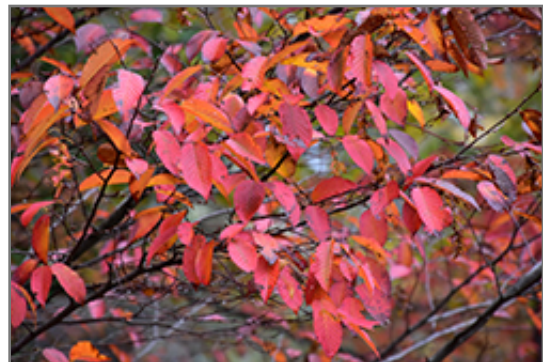
The American Hornbeam is a deciduous tree with a more or less rounded form. Its average texture blends into the landscape, but can be balanced by one or two finer or coarser trees or shrubs for an effective composition.

This tree will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and is best pruned in late winter once the threat of extreme cold has passed. It has no significant negative characteristics.

The American Hornbeam is recommended for the following landscape applications;



*American Hornbeam*  
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



*American Hornbeam in fall*  
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



- Accent
- Shade
- Naturalizing And Woodland Gardens

### Planting & Growing

The American Hornbeam will grow to be about 30 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 25 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 4 feet from the ground, and should not be planted underneath power lines. It grows at a slow rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 80 years or more.

This tree performs well in both full sun and full shade. It is an amazingly adaptable plant, tolerating both dry conditions and even some standing water. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This species is native to parts of North America.

### Growing Place Choice Plants

Our Growing Place Choice plants are chosen because they are strong performers year after year, staying attractive with less maintenance when planted in the right place.



*American Hornbeam bark  
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant  
Finder*