

American chinquapin/ Dwarf Chestnut



Special Characteristics:
**Attracts butterflies, Candidate for
fire management, Good fall color,
Attracts birds, Good wildlife cover,
Rhizomatous, Tolerates drought,
Excellent wildlife food, Edible
seeds, Fragrant flowers**

Castanea pumila

- **Use:** It is native to dry woods and ridges in the Southeastern states, and grows well where summers are hot. It is considered undervalued as a nut tree because its nuts are very sweet and edible, the plants bear nuts early (after only 3-4 seasons) and close to the ground, and they are quite prolific. However, the nuts are sometimes difficult to separate from the burr in which they grow, and also difficult to harvest en masse because they ripen gradually over time, limiting their commercial potential. Consequently, the shrub is valued more as an excellent source of wildlife food and habitat. Small mammals and many bird species feed voraciously on the nuts and the low lateral branches and suckering shoots offer cover for Wild Turkey and Grouse.
- **Exposure/Soil:** This tree prefers dry, acidic to neutral, well-drained soils in full sun to partial shade. Use as a small shade tree or to provide food for yourself and wildlife in a lawn or naturalized area.
- **Growth:** Multi-stemmed shrub or small tree usually around 15 feet tall, taller if grown with single stem or cultivated with little competition.
- **Hardiness:** Zone 7-10; Tree.
- **Foliage:** Deciduous. Leaves can be quite variable, even on the same plant. They are generally simple, alternate, 3- to 6-inches long, pointy at the tip, pinnately veined, with toothed margins, and are usually glabrous on top and fuzzy on the underside. Moderately resistant to chestnut blight.
- **Flower/ Fruit:** Nuts are palatable to humans as well as wildlife. They have a sweet flavor and are eaten by many birds and mammals. They can be difficult to harvest and are not grown commercially.

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