

Corylus avellana 'Contorta' Contorted European Filbert, Henry Lauder's Walking Stick¹

Edward F. Gilman, Ryan W. Klein, and Gail Hansen²

Introduction

A curious shrub with twisted stems and branches, walking stick slowly develops into a nice, rounded form. Branches grow upright when the plant is young, but eventually droop toward the ground. Flowers emerge and hang from bare stems before the foliage appears in the spring. Fruit is persistent and enjoyed by birds, rodents, and humans.



Figure 1. Full Form - *Corylus avellana* 'Contorta': Contorted European Filbert, Henry Lauder's Walking Stick
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Figure 2. Flower - *Corylus avellana* 'Contorta': Contorted European Filbert, Henry Lauder's Walking Stick
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Figure 3. Twig, Contorted - *Corylus avellana* 'Contorta': Contorted European Filbert, Henry Lauder's Walking Stick
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2. Edward F. Gilman, professor, Department of Environmental Horticulture; UF/IFAS Extension, Gainesville, FL 32611.

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Figure 4. Leaf - *Corylus avellana* 'Contorta': Contorted European Filbert, Henry Lauder's Walking Stick
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General Information

Scientific name: *Corylus avellana* 'Contorta'

Pronunciation: KOR-rill-us av-vell-LAY-nuh

Common name(s): Contorted European filbert, Henry Lauder's walking stick

Family: *Betulaceae*

Plant type: shrub

USDA hardiness zones: 4B through 8 (Figure 5)



Figure 5. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Planting month for zone 7: year round

Planting month for zone 8: year round

Origin: not native to North America

Invasive potential: not known to be invasive

Uses: border; container or above-ground planter; accent; cut foliage/twigs

Availability: somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the plant

Description

Height: 5 to 10 feet

Spread: 8 to 12 feet

Plant habit: round

Plant density: moderate

Growth rate: slow

Texture: medium

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: alternate

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: serrate

Leaf shape: orbiculate

Leaf venation: pinnate

Leaf type and persistence: deciduous

Leaf blade length: 2 to 4 inches

Leaf color: green

Fall color: yellow

Fall characteristic: showy

Flower

Flower color: brown

Flower characteristic: spring flowering

Fruit

Fruit shape: elongated

Fruit length: ½ to 1 inch

Fruit cover: dry or hard

Fruit color: brown

Fruit characteristic: suited for human consumption

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: showy; typically multi-trunked or clumping stems

Current year stem/twig color: brown

Current year stem/twig thickness: medium

Culture

Light requirement: plant grows in part shade/part sun

Soil tolerances: acidic; slightly alkaline; sand; loam; clay

Drought tolerance: high

Soil salt tolerances: poor

Plant spacing: 36 to 60 inches

Other

Roots: sprouts from roots or lower trunk

Winter interest: plant has winter interest due to unusual form, nice persistent fruits, showy winter trunk, or winter flowers

Outstanding plant: plant has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more

Pest resistance: long-term health usually not affected by pests

Use and Management

Most people plant walking stick in a prominent location in the landscape so its unusual habit can be displayed. Place it in a mulched bed or in a mass of low ground cover so adjacent plants will not interfere with it. It can be used as the accent in any garden and is often placed near water, near a deck or patio so passers-by can enjoy it up close.

Pests and Diseases

A foliage and twig blight has been reported.