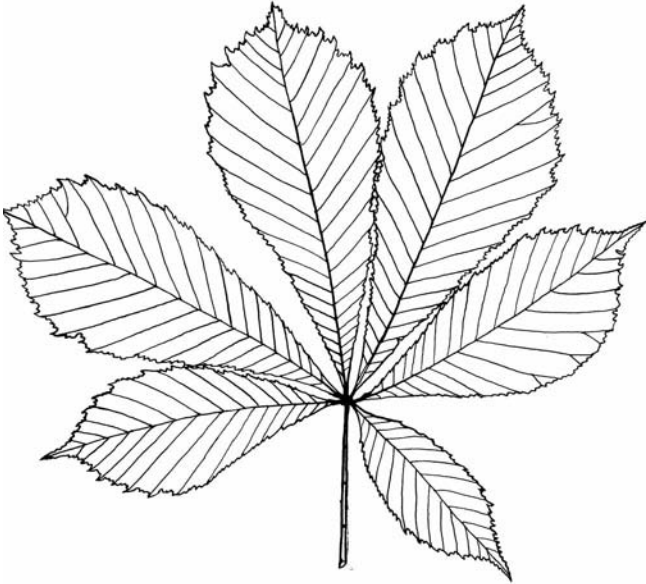


HORSECHESTNUT

Aesculus hippocastanum L.

Horsechestnut is not related to the native chestnut. It comes from Asia and the Balkan Peninsula and is generally planted as a shade and ornamental tree.



It is symmetrically round or oval in outline with a stiff branch habit. The tips of the branches curve slightly when mature. It has a heavy, luxuriant foliage of deep green which changes to bronze in early autumn. The large, opposite leaves with 5-7 leaflets, arranged palmately on a single stalk, distinguish it from any of Maine's native trees. Taken together with the pyramids of white flowers blossoming in the early spring and the large bur-like, leathery husk enclosing one or more smooth, mahogany-colored nuts, it is not easily confused with any other species. It makes a good shade tree but requires rich soil for best development. It is prone to a leaf blight. The fruit is poisonous when taken internally.

The **buds** are large, sticky, and nearly black. The wood is soft, light, and close grained. In Europe it is used for wood carving and veneer.