Not related to the native chestnut, the horsechestnut 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 heavy, luxuriant, deep green foliage which changes to bronze in early autumn. The large, opposite leaves with 5–7 leaflets, are arranged palmately on a single stalk; and distinguish it from any of Maine’s native trees. 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, the horsechestnut is not easily confused with any other species. The nuts are poisonous when ingested. It makes a good shade tree, but requires rich soil for best development. It is prone to a leaf blight.

The buds are large, sticky and nearly black. The wood is soft, light and close-grained. In Europe, it is used for carving and veneer. In the past in the U.S., it was burned as firewood.