

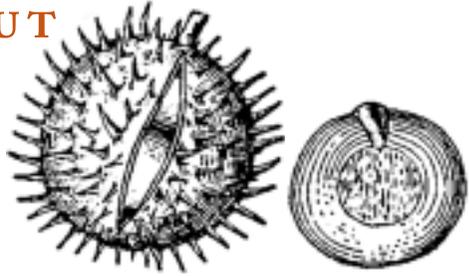


## HORSECHESTNUT

*Aesculus hippocastanum* L.

**N**ot 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.

