

Witch Hazel



It's fall and while most flowers are fading, those of Witch Hazel are just starting to bloom.

Witch Hazel is the latest flowering shrub with flowers appearing in October. Often camouflaged against the

turning leaves, each flower has 4 slender, crinkled petals. Witch Hazel has a long flowering period and takes advantage of whatever insects are still active in the fall for pollination.

Once pollinated, seed development is delayed until next spring. Seeds develop inside a woody seed capsule which usually persist on the plant year round.

This large shade-tolerant shrub can reach 20 feet high.

Its crooked stems grow from the same base, often creating loose thickets in which wildlife may seek shelter.

Witch Hazel is common within Chippewa Nature Center's forests. Look for its brilliant yellow flowers and leaves this autumn.



"Water Witching"

Witch Hazel is a common medicinal plant and can be found as an over-the-counter item in most drugstores. It is typically used as an astringent lotion to treat minor abrasions and skin irritations, but has also been used in teas and diarrhea remedies.

The shrub was also known for its supposed "water witching" powers. Forked limbs were used as divining rods to find underground water, coal, tin, and other lost items by early settlers and native peoples.



Stop by the Visitor Center Office for program information.

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