

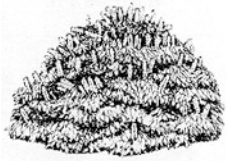
Aesculus parviflora - Bottlebrush Buckeye (*Hippocastanaceae*)

Aesculus parviflora is a sprawling deciduous shrub, known for white inflorescences that appear in summer, shade tolerance, and mounded, spreading, suckering habit. Bottlebrush Buckeye is an excellent Eastern U.S. native shrub for sun or shade.

FEATURES

Form

- multi-trunked medium shrub; to 10' tall x 10' wide
- spreading mound; distinct branching yields a mounded effect when in foliage
- slow growth rate except for basal suckers that are rapid



Culture

- does best in full sun but will grow quite well in partial or even full shade
- prefers a moist, well-drained rich soil
- quite tolerant of stress (such as drought, compaction)
- low availability, but increasing in popularity

Foliage

- opposite arrangement; deciduous
- emerging red-purple, then changing to dark green
- palmately compound with 5 (sometimes 7) leaflets with red petiolules; elliptic to obovate; acuminate; finely serrate; glabrous above and pubescent below; no cosmetic leaf problems as with other Buckeyes
- autumn color - yellow-green to yellow-brown; usually not showy, but on occasion quite noticeable



Flowers

- white petals with white filaments extending 1" beyond petals (hence the name "bottlebrush")
- July; effective for 2 weeks; red anthers; 8" long x 3" wide inflorescences of many solitary flowers, many of which are staminate; showy inflorescences because of white erect nature above green foliage

Fruit

- light brown smooth capsule
- splitting in Sept.-Oct. to yield 1 or 2 - 1" yellow-brown nuts with a prominent white "buck eye"
- usually few if any fruits per shrub

Twigs

- brown stout stem
- light brown leaf scars nearly encircle the stems
- large terminal buds; lateral buds much smaller
- branches becoming light brown and fairly smooth

Trunk

- ash-gray; slightly fissured

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Function

- specimen, border, accent, or foundation sprawling shrub
- understory shrub beneath large trees
- large facer shrub for large trees, or great for embankment plantings (erosion control and spectacular summer flowering display in masses)

Texture

- medium texture in foliage and coarse when bare
- thick density in foliage but very loose when bare

Asset

- large shrub with showy white flowers in mid-summer; prolonged bloom period. One of the few shrubs that flower in summer
- no leaf scorch or powdery mildew problems for this Buckeye species
- full shade tolerant; performs well in both sun and shade

Liabilities

- suckers profusely from base and will invade beyond its original space in a short time
- not easily limbed up
- very sparse structure in winter that makes it a design challenge

Habitat

- Zones 4 to 8
- Native to Southeastern U.S.

SELECTIONS

Alternates

- large accent shrubs that have attractive summer flowers (e.g. *Clethra alnifolia*, *Hydrangea paniculata* 'Tardiva', *Itea virginica*)
- understory shrubs that perform well in sun or shade

Cultivars – Variants – Related species

- straight species is the most common form available
- Aesculus parviflora* var. *serotina* – a later-blooming form of the species with longer and more prominent inflorescences. The plant flowers approximately 2-3 weeks later than the regular species. A cultivar of this variety 'Rogers' has been selected but is very rare in the trade.

