European Bladdernut

Staphylea pinnata

Height: 15 feet

Spread: 15 feet

Sunlight: ◐ ●

Hardiness Zone: 6

Description:

An interesting shrub with narrow leaves and lovely nodding white flowers in spring, producing unique bladder-like fruit in the fall, coveted for dried floral arrangements; self-seeds freely under the right circumstances and may need to be controlled

Ornamental Features

European Bladdernut has nodding white bell-shaped flowers with pink overtones hanging below the branches from early to late spring. It has dark green deciduous foliage which emerges lime green in spring. The narrow compound leaves turn lemon yellow in fall. It produces light green capsules in early fall. The smooth grayish green bark and light green branches are extremely showy and add significant winter interest.

Landscape Attributes

European Bladdernut is a multi-stemmed deciduous shrub with a mounded form. Its average texture blends into the landscape, but can be balanced by one or two finer or coarser trees or shrubs for an effective composition.

This is a high maintenance shrub that will require regular care and upkeep, and is best pruned in late winter once the threat of extreme cold has passed. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Self-Seeding

European Bladdernut is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Mass Planting
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting



European Bladdernut flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



European Bladdernut in bloom
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Planting & Growing

European Bladdernut will grow to be about 15 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 15 feet. It has a low canopy, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 40 years or more.

This shrub does best in partial shade to full shade. Keep it well away from hot, dry locations that receive direct afternoon sun or which get reflected sunlight, such as against the south side of a white wall. It prefers to grow in average to moist conditions, and shouldn't be allowed to dry out. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This species is not originally from North America.

European Bladdernut makes a fine choice for the outdoor landscape, but it is also well-suited for use in outdoor pots and containers. Because of its height, it is often used as a 'thriller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the center of the pot, surrounded by smaller plants and those that spill over the edges. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when grown in a container, it may not perform exactly as indicated on the tag - this is to be expected. Also note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.