

**2011 June Guess that Plant:**



**Witch hazel or Cafe' du Diable *Hamamelis virginiana* L.**

June's "**Guess This Plant**" as witch-hazel, *Hamamelis virginiana* L. Witch hazel or Cafe' du Diable in Acadia, is a common, native, upland shrub characteristic of New Jersey's rich woods and slopes. It is found throughout the Northern provinces (Valley and Ridge, Highlands, Piedmont) and south into the Delaware River valley and Delaware Bay region. Mary Hough (1983) states it is throughout the State outside of the Pine Barrens. One of its characteristic traits is the late autumn flowering period, an unusual strategy for a northern temperate climate plant.

Witch-hazel is long been used medicinally, and it is part of many tonics, potions and rubs. Most times witch-hazel is a tincture mixed with rubbing alcohol and used to soothe aches and pains in muscles. This plant has been used for thousands of years as a medicine. Many Native American cultures used American witch-hazel for the same uses we do as well as more. The Iroquois used it an infusion to act as an anti-diarrheal medicine. It was used by other cultures as a cold remedy, cough medicine, orthopedic aid, toothache medicine, venereal disease when used as a compound, pulmonary aid and others. It was also used as a food when used as a tea.