



As of 2016, the ABMI has found Beaked Hazelnut at 67 sites throughout the province.



Beaked Hazelnut

Corylus cornuta

If you find yourself at a forest edge, unable to see in, you are probably looking at Beaked Hazelnut. It has a habit of growing like a thick hedge where the meadow turns to forest. With its many, spindly branches and thick, tough leaves, think of it as a row of pawns on the Trembling Aspen forest chess board.

DID YOU KNOW?

The husk that surrounds the hazelnut seed is covered in several prickly hairs that can attach to an animal's fur like a burr. While not dangerous, these hairs can irritate the skin.



Description

Beaked Hazelnut is a tall, woody shrub with abundant leafy foliage. The leaves are large, pale green, and coarsely toothed. It produces a round nut that is covered in a tough sheath with a tapered-beak like end. The “flower” of this species is a long catkin that grows in the fall and is pollinated in the spring.

Habitat

This plant likes to live on the edges of hardwood forests. In Alberta, they grow commonly at the margins of Trembling Aspen stands. The Beaked Hazelnut is one of the hardiest hazelnut species, allowing it to grow throughout most of Alberta. Although they don't like to be in the centre of a forest where there is limited light, they also don't want to be out in the middle of the field. These plants are like Goldilocks

when it comes to sunshine – not too much, but not too little. Somewhere right in the middle.

Ecology

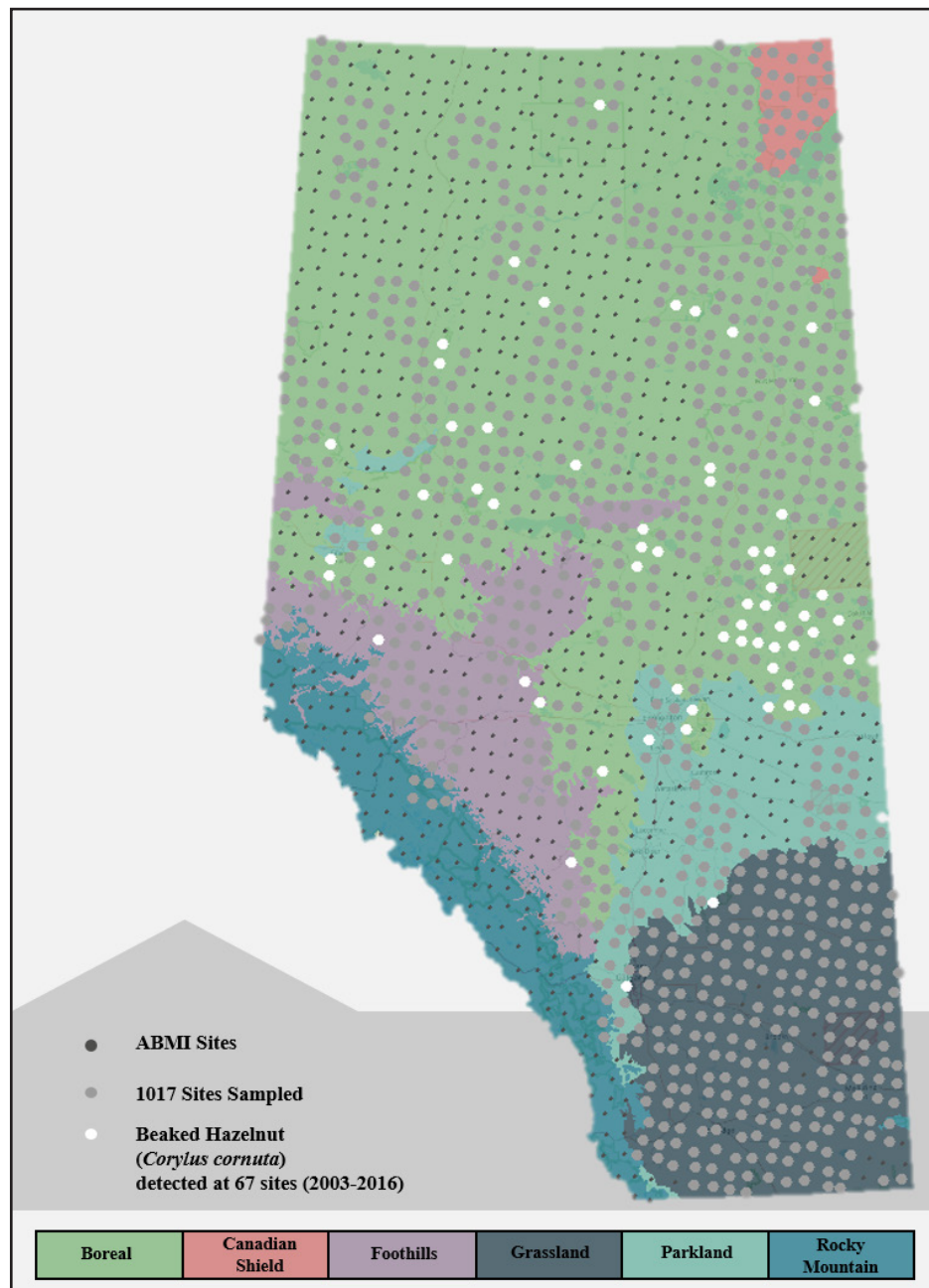
You'll be lucky if you are able to collect a few hazelnuts for yourself to eat. Once mature, these seeds are highly sought after by squirrels and birds for their high nutritional value. These plants also serve as good habitats for animals that require lots of cover since it grows so dense.

Fun Facts

Historically, settlers and First Nations people would grind up Beaked Hazelnut for meals and oils. It gets its name (cornuta) from the Latin word for “horn” or “beak”, describing the beak like end of the seed husk.

Beaked Hazelnut

Detected at
67 of 1017
sites
sampled



Beaked Hazelnut is particularly good at recovering from forest fires. Since only the above ground material is destroyed, this plant is usually one of the first to begin re-sprouting. First Nations people in the USA would purposefully burn forests with Beaked Hazelnut to encourage plant growth and reproduction.

Human Effects

Using ABMI data, we are able to see what impacts humans have on species and their habitats. Beaked Hazelnut has adapted to disturbances such as fire and forest harvest, and with its preference for forest edges, it can tolerate moderate habitat alteration.

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