

when they are taken outside and hardened off, ready for early autumn sales or for sale the following late spring or early summer.

During the growing period in polyhouses they are checked over and any unsuccessful ones are removed. If necessary they are caned and tied, but this is not usually needed with 'Firehill'.

Finally, I can only put forward the following reasons for the success of this operation: these are, the waxing technique, holding in cold store for 6 to 10 week period and, once again, to emphasize the importance of using the highest quality scion material.

## **PROPAGATION OF *CORYLOPSIS***

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*Corylopsis* is a member of the family Hamamelidaceae, cuttings of which, as a family, are difficult to root and hard to get through their first winter. *Corylopsis* is a genus that has high ornamental value at a time of the year when there is little else in the way of flowering plants available in the garden.

There are various means available to the propagator, e.g. seed, layering, and cuttings.

**Seed.** This is not a commercial method, as good seed is not easily obtained and does tend to have double dormancy.

**Layering.** This has been the standard practice for producing plants up until recent times when cuttings have taken over as the best method.

Stock plants are lined out about 2 m apart each way, the beds are top dressed with waste cutting compost, which is worked into the soil to give a good medium for the layers to root into. A shoot from the stock plant is pulled down and pegged into the soil surface; where the stem is bent into the ground the stem is wounded to help in the rooting of the layer. The tip of the stem is placed in a vertical position and staked if required. The bend is covered with soil; this is then left until the following year when it should be well established. It is then severed from the parent plant and containerized and then grown on for 1 to 2 years before being sold.

### **Cuttings.**

**Material.** This should be obtained from good young plants

that are true-to-type. These can either be grown in a stock ground or under protection, as the best rooting material comes from actively growing stock. The longer the delay in taking the cuttings, the harder they become to root.

*Preparation.* The cuttings are made 75 to 100 mm in length and the leaves are trimmed to reduce water loss and to help to get more into a given area. Then they are given a slit wound at the base, which is done by drawing the knife point down the stem on the lower 15 mm when using liquid hormones. Use a slice wound when using powdered hormones. The hormones used depend on the timing of the propagation. For early cuttings taken in June Seradix 2 is ideal. In July/August the material is hardening up so use a liquid hormone (0.5% IBA) allowing it to dry before insertion.

It may be possible to use an acetone dip and then dip into Seradix 2 for the later cuttings as it may be easier to obtain acetone than liquid IBA.

*Insertion.* This is into a 50/50 peat-sand compost using either seed trays or Japanese paper pots. The latter gave little root disturbance which is good as the cuttings are adversely affected by root disturbance when they are potted on.

*Aftercare.* The cuttings are placed under mist and are watered in with Benlate solution as this helps to counteract disease problems.

*Over wintering.* Losses can occur since the cuttings have used up most of its food reserves in rooting and the buds may not be able to break dormancy the following spring. This is a problem with most members of the family Hamamelidaceae, so the aim is to induce 50 to 75 mm of new growth before winter.

If rooted early enough the cuttings can be potted so as to get new growth on them before winter or, if they are late, they are best left in trays until the following spring when they are potted up. The rooted cuttings are housed for the winter. Rooting will be well advanced in 6 to 10 weeks after insertion, with a take of 70 to 90%, on the average.

## **SUCCESSSES AND FAILURES IN STARTING A TREE SEEDLING NURSERY**

**STEWART ST. JOHN**

*Kirby Bellars, Melton Mowbray  
Leicestershire, England*

**Reasons for choosing to start a nursery of this type:**