VERNAL WITCH HAZEL CARE

LIGHT

Vernal witch hazel (Hamamelis vernalis), including Grape Fizz, grows in sun to partial shade and flowers best in a sunny position. Allow room for a broad, multi-stemmed shrub. Use it where its late-winter fragrance and unusual ribbon-like flowers can be enjoyed.

WATER

Maintain consistent moisture during establishment and dry spells. Although established plants tolerate some drought, hot, dry conditions can scorch leaves. Check beneath the mulch and water slowly through the root zone. Do not assume that a shaded plant receives enough rain under nearby tree canopies.

SOIL & PLANTING

Use moist, well-drained garden soil; clay is acceptable when drainage is adequate. Set the plant at the nursery soil level and keep any graft union exposed. Mulch the root area lightly without piling mulch around stems. Allow access to manage spreading shoots.

FEEDING

Avoid heavy feeding of healthy plants. Check light, moisture, and drainage before treating weak growth with fertilizer. Use a soil test to guide any needed nutrients, apply shrub fertilizer in spring at the label rate, and water afterward. Keep concentrated fertilizer away from stems.

SEASONAL CARE

Flowers are carried on older growth. If pruning is needed, work after the late-winter or early-spring flowers fade, removing dead, damaged, or poorly placed branches selectively. Avoid repeated shearing or cutting off flower buds before bloom. Preserve the natural spreading framework.

HELPFUL TIPS

Root suckers can expand the planting into a colony, so remove unwanted shoots while small. On a grafted cultivar, remove shoots arising below the graft. Flower color and exact timing vary by cultivar and weather. This guide covers vernal witch hazel rather than fall-flowering H. virginiana.