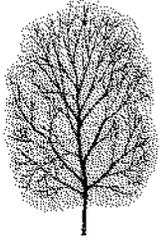


# *Betula papyrifera* - Canoe Birch or Paper Birch (*Betulaceae*)

*Betula papyrifera* is a fast-growing tree with distinctive white bark. Paper Birch is probably the best of all the white bark birches for Ohio. It is very hardy.

## Form



## FEATURES

- medium to large tree up to 40' tall x 30' wide
- typically develops a 0.5:1 height to width ratio
- loosely pyramidal at youth developing an oval rounded crown at maturity
- medium to rapid growth rate

## Culture

- best performance in acid moist soils and a well-mulched root zone
- from full sun to partial shade
- provide cool conditions whenever possible
- moderate availability; typically in clump form
- propagated primarily by seed

## Foliage

- leaves alternate, deciduous, generally rounded
- varies from 0.5-4" long x up to 2" wide
- leaf margin is doubly serrated
- deep green in summer to bright yellow in Oct.



## Flowers

- flowers not showy
- male catkin is yellowish, female catkin is greenish

## Fruits

- the fruit on this plant is the largest of the birch (2" long x 0.25" wide) brown

## Twigs

- bolder than most birches with alternate leaf attachment; cherry-like shiny brown twigs; imbricate buds are acute tipped

## Trunk

- white bark is smooth and extremely showy; may peel as the tree ages.

## USAGE

### Function

- accent tree

### Texture

- medium in foliage; finer during the winter months

### Assets

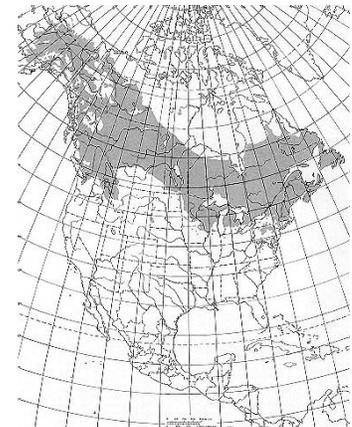
- white bark
- foliage cast light shade

### Liabilities

- plant is moderately susceptible to both bronze birch borer and the birch leaf miner, though comparatively more tolerant than other white bark birches in Ohio;
- not heat tolerant

### Habitat

- Zones 3 to 7
- Native to the boreal forests of North America. The tree is characteristic of arboreal forest, and is native in limited areas of Ohio that include Oak Openings near Toledo and extreme northeastern tip of the state.



## SELECTIONS

### Alternates

- other white bark birches (few options for Ohio; see below)
- other trees with ornamental bark (see *Acer griseum*)

### Cultivars - Variants - Related species

- 'Avalanche' - a cultivar from Lake County Nursery reported to have higher than average resistance to the bronze birch borer

### Other white-barked birches:

- Betula platyphylla* var. *japonica* 'Whitespire' - Whitespire Birch

- 40' x 25'; pyramidal form; may grow 12-18" per year
- Zones 4 to 7

This cultivar was selected by Dr. Ed Hasselkus at the University of Wisconsin for its borer resistance and tolerance to heat. The bark is white and does not exfoliate. Seedlings from this cultivar do not necessarily show the same level of borer resistance. The glossy green foliage turns yellow in the autumn.

### -*Betula pendula* - European White Birch

This plant is NOT RECOMMENDED for much of the Midwestern U.S. as it is very susceptible to the bronze birch borer. There are many cultivars in the trade but they should not be used in the Central Ohio climate.