

Paper Birch

Betula paperifira

-The Paper Birch (aka. White Birch or Canoe Birch) is a classic “up north” tree. I believe that this is a tree that almost everyone finds beautiful. The stridently white bark of the Paper Birch is its most notably feature, but its attributes go much farther than that. It is a fast growing tree that is easy to transplant from spring digging or anytime from containers. Furthermore, almost all nurseries carry the Paper Birch, but beware, the “White-spire Birch” is not a native tree.

-Another wonderful quality of the Paper Birch is that it often will grow in clumps of more than one tree. A single Paper Birch can reach a height of 60 and have a 1 ½ foot diameter. If you plant one, I suggest planting a clump of them.

-The fruit of the Paper Birch is a catkin. Catkins are an extremely important food source for birds, especially the Ruffed Grouse.

-The Paper Birch has been declining in population in the Northwoods recently due to Birch Saw-leaf Miner and Bronze Birch Borer.. This is definitely a tree that we want around for future generations, so maybe planting some on your shoreland property will help in the regeneration of this extremely valuable species.

-For best success I recommend surrounding Paper Birches with mulch. This will relieve some of the stress issues that lead to transplant failure or insect problems. The best place for these beauties is cool but sunny, well-drained northern and eastern exposed slopes. For planting in a yard, I would seriously consider using a River Birch.



**I'd like to go by climbing a birch tree,
And climb black branches up a snow-white trunk
Toward Heaven, till the tree could bear no more, but dipped it tops and set me down
again. That would be good both going and coming back.
One could do worse than to be a swinger of birches.**

-Robert Frost