Paper Birch

Betula papyrifera

Height: 60 feet

Spread: 35 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 2a

Other Names: White Birch, Canoe Birch

Description:

The king of the northern birches, with snow-white peeling bark and gold fall color; needs adequate moisture and well-drained soils; a great accent tree, and one of the best for winter value, keep it happy to avoid problems with birch borer

Paper Birch bark
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Ornamental Features

Paper Birch has dark green deciduous foliage on a tree with an oval habit of growth. The pointy leaves turn an outstanding gold in the fall. The peeling white bark is extremely showy and adds significant winter interest.

Paper Birch in fall
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Landscape Attributes

Paper Birch is a deciduous tree with a shapely oval form. Its average texture blends into the landscape, but can be balanced by one or two finer or coarser trees or shrubs for an effective composition.

This is a relatively low maintenance tree, and should only be pruned in summer after the leaves have fully developed, as it may 'bleed' sap if pruned in late winter or early spring. Deer don't particularly care for this plant and will usually leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Insects

Paper Birch is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Shade

Planting & Growing

Paper Birch will grow to be about 60 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 35 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 3 feet from the ground, and should not be planted underneath power lines. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 70 years or more.

This tree does best in full sun to partial shade. It prefers to grow in average to moist conditions, and shouldn't be allowed to dry out. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone in winter to protect it in exposed locations or colder microclimates. This species is native to parts of North America.

Paper Birch
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder