

Shade Tree (over 30')
Deciduous
Native
Map #9

River Birch
(*Betula nigra*)
Family: *Betulaceae*



Leaves: simple, wedge-shaped at the base; yellow fall color.

Buds: alternate, shingled, slightly hairy.

Stems: hairy at first becoming shing dark brown, gritty with lenticels.

Bark: cinnamon colored, peeling and curling; older trunks bark becomes flatter and corky.

Flowers: separate male and female flowers on a single plant (monoecious); male flowers in slender, pendulous catkins that are formed in fall; females in tiny catkins at the end of twigs, they are formed in spring

Fruits: tiny, winged nutlets in cone-like structures (strobiles).

Habit: young – pyramidal; old – spreading vase to rounded; usually with multiple trunks.

Culture: prefers cool, moist organic soils being native to riverbank habitats; mulch rootzone and water during droughts. Resists bronze birch borer but still susceptible to birch leaf minor and sensitive to alkaline soils which cause them to become chlorotic (leaves very pale green with very dark green veins).

Cultivars: 'Heritage' - Lighter colored bark that remains attractive longer than the species.

Related species: Paper Birch (*B. papyrifera*)



‘Heritage’



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