RIVER BIRCH
Betula nigra

Factsheet 17

Outstanding Features:
Attractive exfoliating bark in shades of tan, pinkish salmon, and reddish brown.

Description:
Height: 40-60' **Width:** 30-40'
Hardiness Zone: 3b

River Birch has a pyramidal to oval form broadening with age. It is often grown as a multi-trunked specimen to better exhibit the showy exfoliating bark. Foliage is shiny medium green in summer, turning yellow in the fall. River Birch is native from southeastern Minnesota to Massachusetts and Florida. In its native habitat it grows along streams and in flood plains.

Requirements and Culture:
Requires good soil fertility. Prefers a slightly acid soil and develops chlorosis in high pH soils. Transplants readily; transplanting should be done in the spring only.

Limitations:
Not tolerant of high soil pH. Resistant to bronze birch borer. Susceptible to birch leaf miner which skeletonizes the leaves.

Selected Cultivars:
'Heritage' - selected for its attractive exfoliating bark characteristics. Bark of 'Heritage' is slightly lighter in color and more showy than most River Birch. It is also more vigorous and has larger leaves than the species.

Photo Credit: 1 E. Hasselkus; 2 MLA. Photo 1 is 'Heritage'.