

10,000 TREES INITIATIVE

TREE INFO CARD

River Birch

(Betula nigra)

Get to know your tree:

The river birch is not native to Michigan, but is native to eastern North America and is non-invasive in Michigan. It has small, coarsely-toothed triangular leaves. Fall leaf color is typically yellow. Flowers are greenish-yellow and occur in catkins dangling from twig tips. Fruits are shaggy upright catkins. Catkins frequently persist into winter. Bark is peeling and is variegated grey, red, orange, and yellow. Often occurs in a multi-stemmed growth form.

Tree benefits:

Each year, a 1-inch diameter river birch provides approximately \$42.00 in benefits and reduces atmospheric CO₂ levels by 34 pounds. To learn more about the benefits provided by your tree, or to see the benefits provided by larger river birches, visit www.treebenefits.com.



Fun facts about your tree:

The river birch is frequently found near abandoned mines, as it is tolerant of the highly acidic soils and erosion associated with most mining activity. This makes it an ideal species for reclaiming and reforesting abandoned mine sites.

Boiling sap from the river birch produces a sweetener similar to maple syrup!



Plant your tree:

When choosing where to plant this tree, consider spots with at least partial sun exposure (at least 4 hours of sun per day). River birches grow to heights of 40-70 feet, with a spread of around 40-60 feet – make sure to consider the size of the tree and do not plant this tree in close proximity to buildings or underneath overhead utilities. Please also consider potential conflicts with solar panels! This species does well in most soil types, but avoid highly alkaline soil. River birches are a great option for spots that flood frequently or need erosion control!

For detailed planting instructions, please visit www.arborday.org/trees/planting. And always make sure to call Miss Dig (1-800-482-7171) to mark underground utilities before digging on your property!

Care for your tree:

This species is moderately tolerant of drought, but prefers moist soil. Watering should be done during dry periods - especially in the summer - but there's no set amount of water your tree needs. Instead, how much you water should be based on the soil. Check the soil at a depth of two inches - if it's moist, there's no need to water. But if it's dry, you should water your tree! Make sure not to water if the temperature is below freezing. Most trees need watering during the first two years after planting - but keep an eye on older trees as well.



www.a2gov.org/10ktrees