

Betula alleghaniensis

Yellow Birch

Native to Maine

Upland Forests, Fields, Wetlands, and Developed Areas

Leaves



Wiki Commons user Jerzy Opiola



Leaves are alternate, simple, oval, pointed, and 6-12 cm long with a rounded base. They are toothed and soft or fuzzy. Leaves are dark green on top and paler green on bottom.

LEAF ARRANGEMENT	LEAF TYPE	LEAF/LEAFLET SHAPE	LEAF/LEAFLET EDGE
 ALTERNATE	 SIMPLE	 PALMATE	 SMOOTH
 OPPOSITE	 COMPOUND-PALMATE	 OVAL	 TOOTHED
 WHORLED	 COMPOUND-PINNATE	 ROUND	 WAVY

Plant



Flickr user esagor



Birch are deciduous trees (lose their leaves in the fall) and reach up to 20 m tall. Yellow Birch trees have straight trunks that grow up to 80 cm in diameter.

Stem



Flickr user pchgorman



The bark of mature trees is shiny bronze or gray and peels horizontally in thin, curly, papery strips. Bark of young saplings is reddish-brown.

Seasonal Change



Flickr user homeredwardprice



Catkins (petal-less flowers) are developed by early summer. In late summer look for a small dry fruit with a flat, papery wing. In the fall the leaves turn yellow.

Similar Species

The shape and size of Yellow Birch and Black Birch are similar. The twigs of both trees smell of wintergreen when crushed, and both trees have simple, oval leaves. A difference between the two trees is that Yellow Birch bark peels into papery strips and Black Birch bark does not.

Fun Fact

Yellow Birch is used in a variety of ways by humans. It is made into veneers for cabinets and furniture, and it is used for firewood because it produces more heat than many other trees. Yellow Birch trees are also tapped for sap that is boiled down to make an edible syrup.

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