Plant World

Japanese White Birch

Betula platyphylla 'var. japonica'



Japanese White Birch
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 50 feet

Spread: 40 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 3b

Description:

An Asian equivalent to our native paper birch with similar white peeling bark and upright oval habit of growth, good yellow fall color; a fine accent or shade tree for the landscape, excellent winter value

Ornamental Features

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

Landscape Attributes

Japanese White Birch is a deciduous tree with a shapely oval form. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other landscape plants with less refined foliage.

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

Japanese White Birch is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Shade

Planting & Growing

Japanese White Birch will grow to be about 50 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 40 feet. It has a high canopy with a typical clearance of 6 feet from the ground, and should not be planted underneath power lines. As it matures, the lower branches of this tree can be strategically removed to create a high enough canopy to support unobstructed human traffic underneath. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 40 years or more.

4000 Eglinton Avenue West
Etobicoke, Ontario

phone: 416-241-9174
web: www.plantworld.net

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 highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone in winter to protect it in exposed locations or colder microclimates. This is a selected variety of a species not originally from North America.

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