

Yellow Birch

Betula alleghaniensis

Yellow birch (also known as golden birch) is recognizable for bronze, papery bark that naturally peels off the trunk of young trees in fine curls. They have serrated, oval-shaped 3"- 5" leaves. They also have fruit known as Catkins with seeds that drop in the fall. Ruffed grouse, squirrels, chipmunks, and songbirds will utilize this tree. The wood of yellow birch is used for flooring, veneer, furniture, and firewood. The inner bark can be distilled to make a wintergreen flavoring. Tea can be made from the bark, and the tree can be tapped for syrup. Yellow Birch is native to Aitkin County.

Height: 60' to 75'

Yellow birch grows slowly, less than 1 foot per year. Yellow birch is a long-lived tree that commonly lives to be 150 years old but can be as old as 300 years old.

Planting environment:

Soil composition: Prefers loam, will grow in richer soils such as peat

Soil moisture: Well-drained, moist but not wet

Sunlight: Intermediate (4-6 hours of sun per day)

Yellow birch produces a number of seedlings that do best when there is no other vegetation. Clearing vegetation and working up the soil before planting will help provide a suitable environment for yellow birch growth. Be sure to protect the seedlings from girdling by rodents and deer browsing. Trees can be protected by fencing and tree guards.

Maintenance:

Yellow birch seedlings can become established under shaded conditions, but seedlings do need sufficient sun light to effectively establish. To aid the seedlings consider harvesting a portion of the taller canopy trees. Control surrounding vegetation and weeds so that seedlings are not outcompeted. Protect seedlings from deer and rabbit browse.

Top diseases/pests:

1. Stem cankers
2. Forest tent caterpillar

