

American Beech

My name is
Hirilorn. You can
find me on the
Yellow Trail



Who am I?

American Beech (*Fagus grandifolia*) is the only species of this genus in North America. American Beech is an upland, slow-growing, common, deciduous tree with smooth, light-gray bark and prominently veined, toothed, dark green leaves. The leaves turn a bronze color in the fall and remain on the tree well into winter. American Beech is monoecious (separate male and female flowers on the same tree).

Where can you find me?

Although American Beech is now confined to the eastern United States (except for the Mexican population) it once extended as far west as California. American Beech does well in upland dry loam, organic, sandy soils.

What Ecological Services do I provide?

Like all trees, American Beech trees take in carbon dioxide (CO₂), release oxygen by way of photosynthesis, and store carbon in their trunks.

American Beech is the only nut producer in the northern hardwood type. The distinctive triangular nuts are eaten by people and are an important food for wildlife including mice, squirrels, chipmunks, Black Bear, deer, foxes, Wild Turkey, Ruffed Grouse, ducks, and Blue Jays. The tree canopy is a favored nesting and roosting site for birds and wildlife. American Beech is also a host plant for butterfly and moth larvae (caterpillars), including Early Hairstreak.

Beech wood is used for flooring, furniture, turned products and novelties, veneer, plywood, railroad ties, baskets, pulp, charcoal, and rough lumber. It is especially favored for fuelwood because of its high density and good burning qualities. Beech wood is excellent for turning and steam bending. It wears well, is easily treated with preservatives, and is used for flooring, furniture, veneer, and containers.

