

Yellow Birch

Who am I?

Yellow Birch (*Betula alleghaniensis*) is easily recognized by the yellowish-bronze exfoliating (“flakey”) bark for which it is named. The inner bark is aromatic and has a flavor of wintergreen. Leaves are deciduous, alternate, simple, narrowly ovate to broadly oblong, base rounded, margins sharply doubly toothed, usually softly hairy beneath.

Where can you find me?

This slow-growing long-lived tree is found with other hardwoods and conifers on moist well-drained soils of mountain ravines and floodplains.

What Ecological Services do I provide?

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

Yellow Birch is a preferred food of the Snowshoe Hare and the White-tailed Deer. White-tail Deer and Moose are especially fond of browsing seedlings during the summer, and green leaves and woody stems in the fall. Porcupines and Red Squirrels also feed on Yellow Birch seeds and feed on its sap.

Yellow Birch is also a favorite summer food source of the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker on its nesting grounds. Many other songbirds eat yellow birch seed. Ruffed Grouse feed on the catkins, seeds, and buds.

Yellow Birch is an important source of hardwood lumber and veneers are used in making furniture, paneling, plywood, cabinets, boxes, woodenware, handles, and interior doors. It is one of the principal hardwoods used in the distillation of wood alcohol, acetate of lime, charcoal, tar, and oils.

My name is Fimbrethil. You can find me on the Orange Trail

