



Photo: Todd Boland

Paper Birch

Betula papyrifera



Paper Birch/White Birch ***Betula papyrifera***

General: A deciduous tree 15–20 m tall. The bark is thin, smooth and reddish-brown on young trees; white and peels in paper-like strips on mature trees and is marked with brown horizontal lines of raised pores.

Leaves & Twigs: Leaves are egg to triangular-shaped and usually 3–8.5 cm long.

Flowers & Fruit: Male and female flowers grow in separate catkins on the same twigs. Male catkins 2–10 cm long look like yellowish-brown worms and hang from twig tips. Female catkins (2-4 cm long) appear with emerging leaves and stand erect at the branch tips.

Habitat: Found in open to dense woodland throughout Newfoundland and south of 57° in Labrador.

Blooming Time: mid-May to late June

How to Observe: Select and mark a mature tree with low-hanging catkins.

First Bloom: When the male catkins first start shedding pollen in at least three places on the tree.

Mid Bloom: When half the male catkins are shedding pollen.

Leaf Out: When the first leaves have emerged and unfolded completely in three different places on the tree.