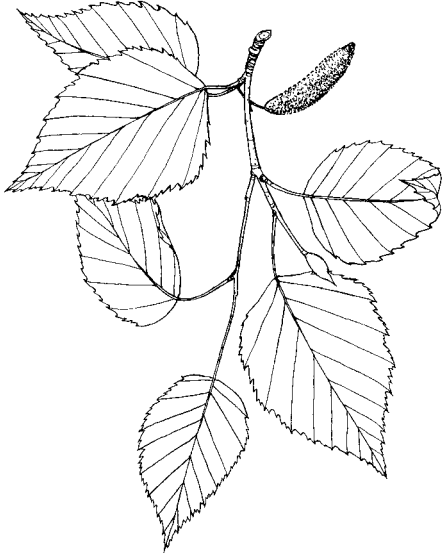


PAPER BIRCH

Betula papyrifera Marsh.

Paper, white or canoe birch is a common tree in all parts of the state and occurs in pure stands or in mixture with other species. It reaches 60 - 70 feet in height, and 1 - 2 feet in diameter. It grows along streams and on the borders of lakes and ponds, thriving best in a rich, moist soil.

When young, the branches are short, slender, and spreading, somewhat drooping, and forming a narrow, regular head. In the forest the trunk is free from branches well up from the ground, and the tree forms an open, narrow and round-topped head.



The **bark** on the trunk and limbs separates freely and easily into thin, papery sheets. The outer surface is white, the inner part bright orange. Seedlings or very young trees have a darker colored bark, which gradually changes to a creamy-white. The bark is a protective layer and should never be removed from living trees.

The **leaves** are alternate, ovate, short-pointed, 2 - 4 inches long, thicker than those of gray birch, doubly-toothed, with the upper surface dark green and dull.

The **flowers** are in catkins. Those appearing in the fall are dormant, staminate catkins and occur mostly in clusters of 3. They open in early spring before the leaves.