PLANT FACT SHEET

Betula pendula Roth.

GENUS *Betula* **FAMILY** Betulaceae

COMMON NAMES European Birch, Silver Birch

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Flowers, Leaves, Sap - wine, Bark

The sap has a sweet flavour and is eaten. Wine is made from the sap. The sap can also be made into vinegar. The young leaves can be eaten fresh in salads or lightly cooked as a vegetable. The leaves are also used for tea. The inner bark is powdered and cooked and eaten.
The flower spikes are milled into flower and added to bread.

DESCRIPTION

A deciduous tree. It grows 15-25 m tall. It spreads to 6-9 m wide. The bark is white. The branches hang downwards. It loses its leaves during the year. The leaves are diamond shape. Some have deeply lobed leaves. The leaves are 3-7 cm long. There is a tapering tip. The male or pollen catkins are in groups of 2-4. The mature seed catkins are 2-4 cm long. They hang down. They are at the end of twigs. The female catkins are upright.

HABITAT

It is a temperate plant. It is native to North Asia and Europe. It grows in temperate broad-leaved forests between 500–2300 m altitude in China. It can grow in many soil types. It is very hardy. It needs to be in full sun. It does best in sandy soils with a pH below 6.5. It does poorly in alkaline soils. It suits hardiness zones 2-9. Tasmania Herbarium. Arboretum Tasmania. National Arboretum Canberra.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from seed. Seed germinate easily.

Harvesting and Seed Production

It is fast growing. Trees can yield 82 litres per tree during a week in early spring.

NOTES

There are about 60 Betula species. They grow in cool north temperate climates.

PICTURES



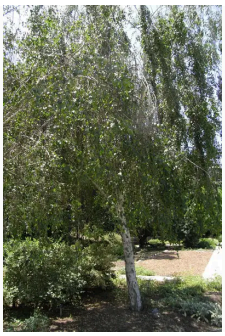
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French, B.R. & Maynard, A.R. Food Plants International Database. Food Plants International

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