

# Betula nigra HERITAGE

## HERITAGE River Birch



*Betula nigra* 'HERITAGE' is a selected cultivar of *Betula nigra*, discovered in 1970 by nurseryman Earl Cully in a suburb of St. Louis, Missouri, United States, and introduced in 1979 under plant patent number 4409. The tree can grow to approximately ten to fifteen meters in height and six to ten meters in width. The crown starts out pyramidal and gradually develops into a broadly ovate, more open, semi-open crown with gracefully drooping branches.

The bark is one of its most striking features. On young trees it is creamy white; with age, it exfoliates in curling plates that change color from reddish pink and cinnamon brown to a lighter cream white. The diamond to ovate shaped leaves are slightly larger and greener than those of the species. In autumn, they turn a bright yellow, creating an attractive contrast with the fine reddish brown twigs. 'HERITAGE' flowers abundantly in early spring with yellow green catkins. The male catkins are pendulous, while the female catkins are upright. The fruits mature in late spring and also hang in catkins.

River birch 'HERITAGE' retains its decorative bark for a long time and performs very well in warmer climates, while also being fully winter hardy. This cultivar grows best on moist to wet soils such as riverbanks and marshy areas, but once established it can tolerate moderately dry conditions. Heavy clay soils and soils with very high lime content are best avoided. Semi-paved conditions and wind are well tolerated, and this selection shows better resistance to the bronze birch borer than the species. *Betula nigra* 'HERITAGE' is an excellent choice for use in tree planters, broad green strips, parks, and large gardens, where this strong and ornamental tree provides year-round ornamental value.

### SEASONAL COLOURS



### TYPES OF PLANTING

**Tree types:** standard trees, feathered trees, multi-stemmed trees, characteristic trees | **Topiary on stem:** multi-stem umbrella

### USE

**Location:** street, avenue, park, central reservation, roof garden, large garden, cemetery, bioswale | **Pavement:** none, open

### CHARACTERISTICS

**Crown shape:** egg-shaped | **Crown structure:** semi-open | **Height:** 10 - 15 m | **Width:** 6 - 10 m | **Winter hardiness zone:** 4A - 9B

### ASPECTS

**Wind:** tolerant to wind | **Soil:** loess, sabulous clay, light clay, sand, loamy soil | **Nutrient level:** low in nutrients, moderately rich in nutrients, rich in nutrients | **Soil moisture level:** dry, moist | **Light requirements:** sun, partial shade | **pH range:** acidic, neutral | **Host plant/forage plant:** butterflies | **Extreme environments:** tolerates air pollution, tolerates heat, tolerant to short-term flooding

### PLANTKENMERKEN

**Flowers:** catkins, pendulous | **Flower colour:** golden yellow | **Flowering period:** April - April | **Leaf colour:** green | **Leaves:** deciduous, ovate, polished, serrate, dentate | **Autumn colour:** yellow | **Fruits:** striking, catkins | **Fruit colour:** yellow-brown | **Bark colour:** cream, red-brown | **Bark:** peeling | **Twig colour:** red-brown | **Twigs:** bare, pendulous | **Root system:** shallow, slightly branched, many hair roots