



Gwent Wildlife Trust

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Silver Birch

Betula pendula

- Wildlife
- Trees and shrubs
- Silver Birch



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Protect local wildlife



Species information

Common name
Silver Birch

Latin name
Betula pendula

Category
Trees and shrubs

Statistics
Height: up to 30m

Conservation status
Common.

About

Silver Birch is a familiar, small, spindly tree with thin branches and papery bark. It is found on heathland, moorland and mountainsides, as well as on dry, sandy soils. One of the first trees to recolonise the UK after the last glacial period, Silver Birch is an opportunistic species; its seeds are produced in huge numbers and dispersed easily by the wind.

How to identify

Birches are easily recognised by their white, papery bark. The Silver Birch can be distinguished from the similar Downy Birch by its more triangular leaves, with jagged teeth, growing from hairless leaf stalks. It also has droopier branches and leaves.

Where to

Widespread

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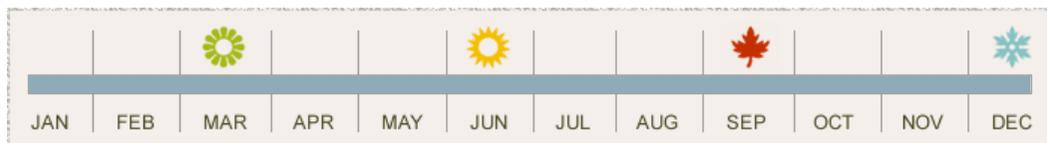
Yes, I agree

I want to find out more

Habitats



When to find it



How can people help

The pioneering nature of Silver Birch can cause a problem in certain habitats, such as heathlands and fens. Here, it can grow quickly, invading the floor and shading out other, specialist plants. When this occurs on Wildlife Trust nature reserves, it is usually cleared or thinned to allow the heathland or fen to regenerate. On the other hand, Silver Birch in the right place can provide a great habitat for everything from birds to insects, so it is left to grow naturally in many areas.

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