Fox Valley River Birch

Betula nigra 'Little King'



Fox Valley River Birch
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 10 feet

Spread: 12 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 4a

Other Names: Red Birch

Description:

A wonderful dense and compact landscape-scale birch, more of an irregularly rounded-spreading large shrub than a tree, with interesting cinnamon colored bark; ideal size for use in a garden setting

Ornamental Features

Fox Valley River Birch features subtle chartreuse catkins in early spring. It has dark green deciduous foliage. The pointy leaves turn an outstanding yellow in the fall. The peeling tan bark is extremely showy and adds significant winter interest.



Fox Valley River Birch bark
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Landscape Attributes

Fox Valley River Birch is a dense multi-stemmed deciduous shrub with a more or less rounded form. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other landscape plants with less refined foliage.

This is a relatively low maintenance shrub, and should only be pruned in summer after the leaves have fully developed, as it may 'bleed' sap if pruned in late winter or early spring. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Fox Valley River Birch is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Mass Planting
- General Garden Use

Planting & Growing

Fox Valley River Birch will grow to be about 10 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 12 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 1 foot from the ground, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 40 years or more.

This shrub does best in full sun to partial shade. It is quite adaptable, prefering to grow in average to wet conditions, and will even tolerate some standing water. It is not particular as to soil type, but has a definite preference for acidic soils, and is subject to chlorosis (yellowing) of the foliage in alkaline soils. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone in winter to protect it in exposed locations or colder microclimates. This is a selection of a native North American species.