

Hardwood Species Descriptions



Southern Catalpa (*Catalpa bignonioides*)

is a small tree found naturally in the southern and gulf states. Catalpa is often planted as an ornamental because of its showy white or purple-tinted flowers and its unusual long, cigar-shaped, seed pods. It is frequently a host to caterpillars that are used for fishing bait. It is a fast growing tree which prefers moist, well drained, alkaline soil, but can tolerate a range of soil types.

River Birch (*Betula nigra*) the cinnamon-colored, exfoliating bark of the River Birch is spectacular in the winter. Lustrous, medium-green leaves. One of the most appealing features of the birch is the bark, which, on larger, young branches and stems, is reddish to pinkish brown and peels off in papery strips. The exposed inner bark is gray-brown to cinnamon-brown to reddish brown. The bark of a mature birch is ridged and deepens to dark brown. This tree is handsome without leaves because of its graceful silhouette and exfoliating bark. Although the river birch thrives in wet areas, it does not require excessive amounts of water. It tolerates fairly dry soils once it is established. It requires acidic soils, suffering from iron deficiency if pH levels are 6.5 or higher. This species requires full sun and tolerates high temperatures. Grows to 40' to 70', 40'-60' spread.



Redbud (*Cercis canadensis*) A shrub or small tree seldom reaching 50 feet in height and 12 inches in diameter. It is prized for ornamental use with its showy purplish flowers that bloom in the spring before the leaves emerge. Although the redbud does well in most soil types, it prefers moist, well-drained sites. It does not, however, like those that are permanently wet. It tolerates acid or alkaline soils. It grows well in full sun but prefers some shade in the heat of summer. Although it will grow in fairly dense shade, it blooms more heavily when exposed to sun. Redbuds tolerate moderate dry spells, but do better when irrigated in summer dry spells.