

WACD PLANT MATERIALS CENTER

16564 Bradley Road, Bow WA 98232
(360) 757-1094

Water Birch (*Betula occidentalis*)

Distribution

The native range of Water Birch is primarily Eastern Cascades, where it is found at lower to mid-elevations.

Growth Habit

Water Birch is a smaller, shrubby Birch species. It grows to 20 feet tall with multiple stems that arise from the ground and gracefully arch outwards. It creates a spreading canopy that can grow 10 to 15 feet wide.

Adaptability

Like other Birch species, Water Birch prefers moist sites. It is most commonly found along streams or other bodies of water, or in damp meadows. It tolerates some shade, but prefers moderate to full exposure.

Comments

- Due to its smaller stature, Water Birch is not an economically important tree species (unlike Paper Birch). The value of its wood is limited to use for fuel wood and in some cases fence posts.
- It is very valuable as a riparian species. Its roots are effective in streamside soil stabilization, providing shade and as shelter and food for many species of birds and mammals.

