

December 2012 *Guess that Plant*



***Betula pendula* Roth.**

The December *Guess that Plant* was tricky photo of bark that received a number of guesses that were *oh so close*. Last month's plant, the European birch, has young bark reminiscent of Paper Birch, *Betula papyrifera*, yet as the tree ages, the bark transforms into small raised exfoliating fragments seen in the photo used for the December GTP. The tree may become "pendulous" or takes on a weeping or drooping appearance as it ages.

It is a species that exists in New Jersey only as escaped specimens or from nursery stock. It is not considered an established or invasive species but a plant we have to refer to when describing specimens of *Betula* found in the winter months. New Jersey has the footprint of modern man everywhere and one cannot be sure enough when finding an unusual specimen deep in the forest that we would think of as natural. Remember, that land you are standing on has been "owned" since the 1600's and it was no doubt used, leaving sometimes specimens such as the one shown.

JRA 1.2013