

Silver birch

Betulaceae - Betula pendula

What does it look like?

Tree that grows to about 25m in height, it has semi-drooping branches. It is native to Europe and parts of Asia. Bark smooth at first, silvery-white and peppery, becoming dark grey and rough when mature. Simple leaves grow to about 6cm long with 5-7 pairs of veins and serrated edges. Males have slim, cylindrical flower clusters up to 9cm long and females about 2.5cm long. Flower clusters are papery when ripe and separate into large numbers of winged seeds. Seeds are carried by the wind.

Why is it a problem?

Silver birch is listed as an organism of interest as it will form a dense canopy which suppresses the growth of low growing native species. It grows on roadsides, open areas and wastelands.

Silver birch produces a lot of pollen, making it a potent allergen source to people who are affected by asthma, hayfever or other respiratory illnesses.

Control methods

Herbicide control:

- Cut tree at ground level and paint stump with herbicide gel

CAUTION: When using any herbicide or pesticide, PLEASE READ THE LABEL THOROUGHLY to ensure that all instructions and safety requirements are followed.

Plants with seed must be buried deeply, burnt, or disposed of at a refuse transfer station.

Follow up at six-monthly intervals to complete eradication.

Management programme

- Organisms of interest

[Request info](https://eservices.es.govt.nz/online-services/new/BiosecurityRFS/step/1?Subject=PlantPests&Species=230)

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