FORM: Small tree or loosely branched shrub, up to 15m (13-26ft) tall; frequently found in crowded, dense thickets.

IDAHO CHAMPION: var. occidentalis, 1973. 29in dbh; 91.1in circum. + 50ft tall + 7ft crown = 148pts; Sawtooth NF.

BARK: Smooth, shiny, reddish-brown, marked by pale horizontal lenticels; bark does not exfoliate.

BUDS: Brown, resinous, pointed, about 6mm long.

LEAVES: Alternate, deciduous, broadly ovate to diamond-shaped, 3-5cm (1-2in), serrate to dentate, green above, pale yellow-green and minutely glandular below, initially sticky; changes to dull yellow in autumn.

FLOWERS: Cylindrical catkin 2cm long, flowering with or before leaves in the spring; Feb.-June; breaking up at maturity.

FRUIT: A winged samara tipped with persistent styles (1).


HABITAT: Along streams or on open hillside.

NOTES: Most common birch in Idaho. B. occidentalis and B. papyrifera freely hybridize in northern Idaho.