

You are viewing one of thousands of biographies – click below for more, including Search box and access to Plant associated organisations.

[Plant Biographies](#)

[Bibliography](#)

Betula nana

[Synonyms : *Betula exilis*, *Betula glandulosa*]

DWARF BIRCH is a deciduous shrub. Native to the polar and northern temperate regions, it has yellowish catkins.

It is also known as Arctic birch, *Betulo nana* (Esperanto), Bog birch, *Breza trpasličia* (Slovak), *Bříza trpasličí* (Czech), *Bříza zakrslá* (Czech), *Dvärgbjörk* (Swedish), Dwarf betula, Rock birch, Shrub birch, Smooth dwarf birch, Swamp birch, *Vaivaiskoivu* (Finnish), and *Zwerg-Birke* (German).

Nana is derived from Latin *nanus* (dwarf) meaning ‘dwarf or small’.

Alaskan Inuits have used the wood under their skin bedding. But perhaps one of its most useful attributes is that it burns easily and has not only provided Inuit tribes with fuel for cooking and smoking food, but tinder – which works even when wet.

Dwarf birch has also provided medicine for some of the Alaskan Inuits who have used it to treat various stomach problems.

In Lapland the seeds of dwarf birch are the principal food for ptarmigan.

The wood’s yellow fungus excrescences can be used, like wormwood (*Artemisia absinthium*), in moxibustion.