

December 8, 2017

## Beech Please!

Beech trees are among the most noble of shade trees. Long-lived and majestic, they are storm-resistant and subject to few pests and diseases. American Beech is a grand monarch of Eastern North American hardwood forests, while Green Beech is a magnificent and stately tree of forests throughout Europe. The latter has many cultivars including the best of the purple-leafed cultivars, Rivers Purple Beech. More cultivars are described and available in the B&B section on Page 5.

**American Beech** (*Fagus grandifolia*) is a stately North American native tree that's a perfect choice for parks, campuses, boulevards and large residential sites far beyond its native range. Light grey bark is smooth,

thick and begs to be stroked. Large dark green leaves turn bronze-gold in the fall, persisting through the winter months in milder climates. Edible nuts are favored by birds and squirrels, and were once ground by settlers and used as a substitute for coffee.



American Beech



Green Beech

from a 6 ft. B&B tree purchased from JFS and was planted about 20 years ago.

**Rivers Purple Beech** (*Fagus sylvatica* 'Riversii') is the most popular and widely planted of the purple leaf European Beech cultivars. A tree of enduring popularity, it was selected in England more than 150 years ago by Thomas Rivers. Leaves emerge reddish-purple in spring and deepen to rich, dark purple. Foliage maintains a good purple-bronze color through the heat of summer and turns to burnished copper in the fall. Smooth silver-gray bark is beautiful all year long.

**Green Beech** (*Fagus sylvatica*) is a large and stately tree that matures in a broadly pyramidal to oval shape. In 30 years, it will grow to about 50 feet in height with a spread of about 40 feet. Its beautiful silvery gray bark stands out in the winter garden and contrasts well with its dark green summer foliage that turns golden orange to bronze and then to brown in autumn. The tree pictured was grown



Rivers Purple Beech