

Prunus serrulata - Japanese Flowering Cherry or Oriental Cherry (*Rosaceae*)

Prunus serrulata is a popular flower tree because of its dramatic display of flowers in the spring. Japanese Flowering Cherry is a relatively short-lived plant in the landscape because of numerous pest and disease problems. The cultivar 'Kwanzan' (or 'Kanzan') is the most popular and cold hardy of many cultivars that can be grown in Western countries.

Form



FEATURES

- vase-shaped to rounded outline
- deciduous tree
- the species is a large tree growing 50-75' tall; but mainly grown from numerous cultivars which grow 20-25'
- the form of the cultivars varies

Culture

- full sun to partial sun
- prefers damp, well-drained, fertile soils but will tolerate others; especially of variable pH.
- does not tolerate poor drainage.
- the cultivar 'Kwanzan' is cold hardy and tolerates heat and humidity.

Foliage



- alternate, simple, elliptical shape (2-5" long x 1-2.5" wide), serrated margins, shiny, reddish brown or bronze when unfolding, lustrous dark green above and pale green below in summer
- autumn color is often a

good bronze to subdued red
-petioles have obvious glands

Flowers



- for the species, the flowers are greatly variable but range from single to doubles, white to pinks, and from 0.5-2.5" in diameter; they usually flower in Apr. to early May and
- borne profusely

along the stems, usually before or with the leaves

Fruit

- rare to none

Twigs

- thin, reddish brown and lenticelled

Trunk

- bark is thin, smooth, reddish to bronze, glossy with very prominent horizontal lenticels

USAGE

Function

- specimen, massing, foundation, border, or entranceway ornamental tree

Texture

- medium texture in foliage and when bare
- open density in foliage and when bare

Assets

- dramatic floral display
- variable form (depending on cultivar)
- soil adaptable

Liabilities

- several potential diseases and pests, as is typical of most Rose Family members
- aphids, spider mites, caterpillars, and pear slugs
- relatively short-lived because of the large number of pests that will attack the tree
- many cultivars are not cold hardy in zone 5 ('Kwanzan' is the most cold hardy)

Habitat

- Zones 5 (6) to 8
- Native to Japan

SELECTIONS

Alternates

- early- to mid-Spring-flowering ornamental trees (*Amelanchier*, *Cornus florida*, *Malus*, *Prunus subhirtella*, *Pyrus calleryana*, etc.)
 - weeping or cascading flowering trees or large shrubs
- Cultivars – Variants – Related species**
-many cultivars are available

-*P. serrulata* 'Kwanzan' ('Kanzan' or 'Sekiyama') - perhaps the most commonly grown cultivar.

Deciduous tree to 15-25' in height; upright, branches stiffly ascending, spreading. Leaves large, short

tooth serrations, new leaves bronzy, may turn orange-bronze in autumn. Flowers deep pink, double (23-28 petals), 2-3" diam., 5 per pendulous clusters, blooms abundantly.



Note: Kanzan is a old Japanese poetic word meaning "bordering mountain". The word conjured an image of a "native land or village of one's birth that lay in a valley." It is unclear why this word was applied to a cherry. 'Kanzan' is also called 'Sekiyama' or 'Sekizan' and 'Kwanzan' believed by some to be an obsolete spelling of 'Kanzan'.