

## *Prunus subhirtella* 'Autumnalis': 'Autumnalis' Higan Cherry<sup>1</sup>

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### Introduction

Double-flowered ('Autumnalis') Higan Cherry is 25 to 35-foot-tall and wide tree, usually with a multiple trunk, slender, upright branches, and a rounded canopy. The canopy on older trees often grows wider than the tree grows tall. Before the leaves appear in spring, the trees are covered with many semi-double pink flowers; some flowers may also appear in autumn if the weather is sufficiently warm. The one to four-inch-long dark green leaves are later joined by the appearance of small, black berries. The leaves cast light shade below the spreading canopy, and turn attractive fall colors of yellow and bronze before dropping.

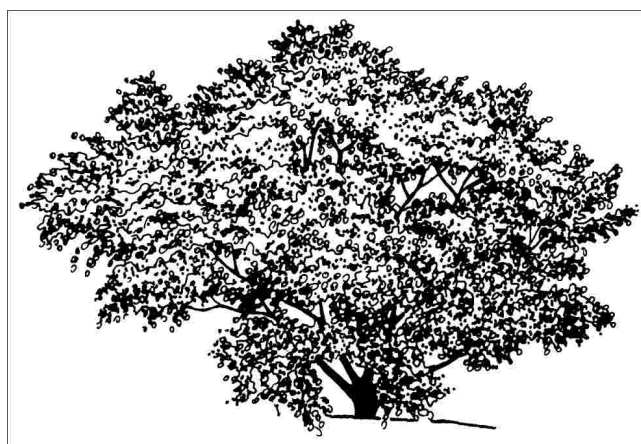
### General Information

**Scientific name:** *Prunus subhirtella*

**Pronunciation:** PROO-nus sub-her-TELL-uh

**Common name(s):** 'Autumnalis' Higan Cherry

**Family:** *Rosaceae*



**Figure 1.** Middle-aged *Prunus subhirtella* 'Autumnalis': 'Autumnalis' Higan Cherry

**USDA hardiness zones:** 5A through 8B (Fig. 2)

**Origin:** not native to North America

**Invasive potential:** little invasive potential

**Uses:** specimen; deck or patio; highway median; shade

**Availability:** somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the tree

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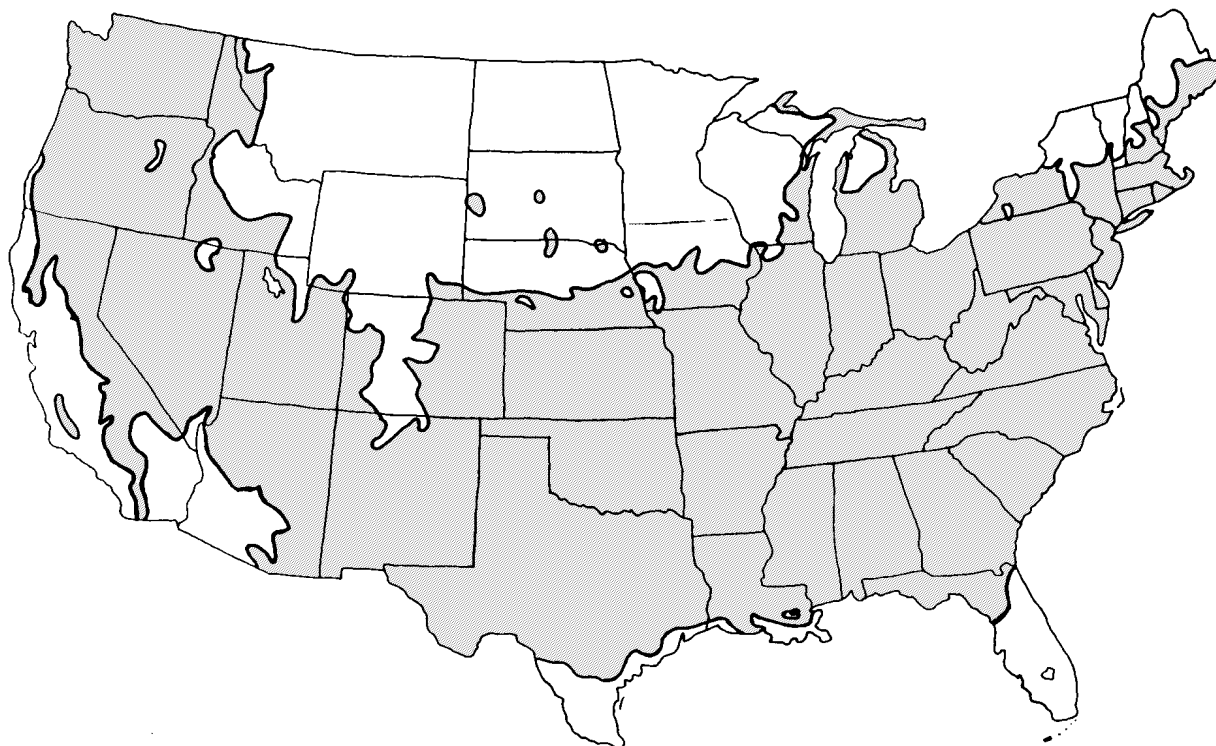


Figure 2. Range

### Description

**Height:** 25 to 35 feet

**Spread:** 25 to 35 feet

**Crown uniformity:** symmetrical

**Crown shape:** vase

**Crown density:** dense

**Growth rate:** fast

**Texture:** medium

### Foliage

**Leaf arrangement:** alternate (Fig. 3)

**Leaf type:** simple

**Leaf margin:** serrate

**Leaf shape:** oblong, ovate

**Leaf venation:** pinnate, brachidodrome

**Leaf type and persistence:** deciduous

**Leaf blade length:** less than 2 inches, 2 to 4 inches

**Leaf color:** green

**Fall color:** yellow

**Fall characteristic:** showy

### Flower

**Flower color:** pink

**Flower characteristics:** showy

### Fruit

**Fruit shape:** oval

**Fruit length:** less than .5 inch

**Fruit covering:** fleshy

**Fruit color:** black

**Fruit characteristics:** attracts birds; not showy; fruit/leaves not a litter problem

## Trunk and Branches

**Trunk/bark/branches:** branches don't droop; showy; typically one trunk; thorns

**Pruning requirement:** little required

**Breakage:** resistant

**Current year twig color:** brown

**Current year twig thickness:** thin

**Wood specific gravity:** unknown

## Culture

**Light requirement:** full sun

**Soil tolerances:** clay; sand; loam; acidic; well-drained

**Drought tolerance:** moderate

**Aerosol salt tolerance:** unknown

## Other

**Roots:** not a problem

**Winter interest:** yes

**Outstanding tree:** yes

**Ozone sensitivity:** unknown

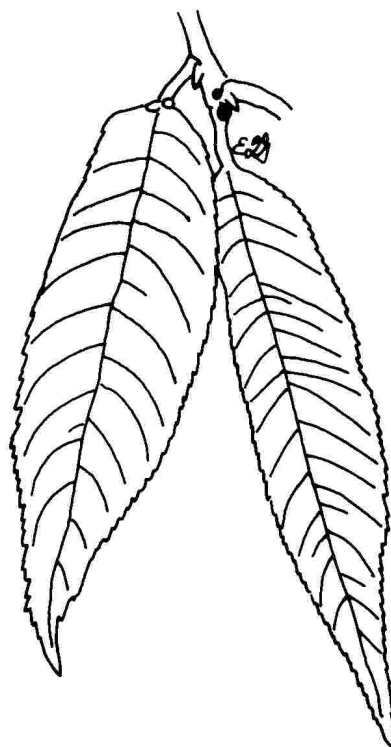
**Verticillium wilt susceptibility:** susceptible

**Pest resistance:** sensitive to pests/diseases

## Use and Management

Use the tree along an entrance road to a commercial development planted on 20-foot centers or along side the patio or deck in the back yard. It also makes a nice small-scale court yard tree or specimen planted in the lawn or in bed of ground cover. It could be planted along a residential street where there is plenty of soil for root expansion. It is becoming available in the industry.

Double-flowered Higan Cherry should be grown in full sun or partial shade on well-drained, acid soil with sufficient moisture. It is moderately drought-tolerant and grows well in clay soil, as long



**Figure 3.** Foliage

as it drains well. Trees grow quickly when young but slow down with age.

Propagation is by cuttings or grafts.

## Pests

Aphids cause distortion of new growth, deposits of honeydew, and sooty mold.

Borers attack trees under stress. Keep trees healthy with regular fertilizer applications.

Scales of several types infest prunus. Horticultural oil is used to provide some control of overwintering stages.

Spider mites cause yellowing or stippling but are very difficult to see. They are usually recognized only after plant symptoms are quite advanced.

Tent caterpillars make large webbed nests in trees then eat the foliage. One defoliation may not be serious and small nests can be pruned out and destroyed. Use *Bacillus thuringiensis* when the insects are first seen and are still small.

## Diseases

No diseases are of major concern. A bacterium causes leaf spot and twig cankers on cherry. Small, reddish spots dry, and drop out, giving a shot-holed appearance. Defoliation can be severe when conditions favor disease development. Fertilize infected trees and prune out infected branches.

A fungus causes reddish spots which drop out leaving shot holes. Once the holes appear the leaves may drop. The disease is worse in wet weather.

Black knot causes black swellings or galls on the branches. Branches with galls are pruned out.