**Introduction**

Japanese Flowering Apricot may be the longest-lived of the flowering fruit trees eventually forming a gnarled, picturesque, 20-foot-tall tree. Appearing during the winter on bare branches are the multitude of small, fragrant, pink flowers which add to the uniqueness of the tree's character. The small yellow fruits which follow the blooms are inedible but attractive.

**General Information**

Scientific name: *Prunus mume*

Pronunciation: PROO-nus MEW-may

Common name(s): Japanese Apricot

Family: Rosaceae

USDA hardiness zones: 6A through 8B (Fig. 2)

Origin: not native to North America

Invasive potential: little invasive potential

Uses: specimen; deck or patio; highway median

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

**Description**

Height: 12 to 20 feet

Spread: 15 to 20 feet

Crown uniformity: irregular


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**Crown shape:** round, vase
**Crown density:** moderate
**Growth rate:** moderate
**Texture:** fine

### Foliage
- **Leaf arrangement:** alternate (Fig. 3)
- **Leaf type:** simple
- **Leaf margin:** serrate
- **Leaf shape:** ovate
- **Leaf venation:** pinnate
- **Leaf type and persistence:** deciduous
- **Leaf blade length:** 2 to 4 inches
- **Leaf color:** green
- **Fall color:** no color change
- **Fall characteristic:** not showy

![Figure 3. Foliage](image)

### Flower
- **Flower color:** pink
- **Flower characteristics:** showy

### Fruit
- **Fruit shape:** round
- **Fruit length:** 1 to 3 inches
- **Fruit covering:** fleshy
- **Fruit color:** yellow
- **Fruit characteristics:** attracts birds; showy; fruit/leaves not a litter problem

### Trunk and Branches
- **Trunk/bark/branches:** branches droop; not showy; typically multi-trunked; thorns
- **Pruning requirement:** needed for strong structure
- **Breakage:** resistant
- **Current year twig color:** green
- **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

### Use and Management
The tree is well suited for planting near the patio or deck. Locate it where it will receive sun on all sides of the tree to develop a uniform crown, for it becomes one sided when exposed to sun on only one side. It would add color to the shrub border during the winter when most other plants are dormant. It makes a very nice specimen in a lawn or planted as a group to accent a building entrance.

Japanese Flowering Apricot should be grown in full sun on well-drained, fertile, acid soils. Not adapted to poor or dry soils. Plants will require heavy pruning to flower their best. The tree is now being grown by a handful of nurseries, and some nurseries are growing a cultivar or two. Adhere to cultural requirements for best growth.

Cultivars include: `Bonita`, semidouble rose-red blossoms; `Dawn`, large ruffled double pink; `Peggy Clarke`, double deep rose; `Rosemary Clarke`, double white flowers with red calyces; and `W.B. Clarke`, double pink flowers, weeping plant form. None are really available in large quantities.

Propagation is by cuttings or by seed.

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

Borers attack stressed trees. Keep trees healthy with regular fertilizer applications.

Scales of several types infest the cherries. Horticultural oil is used to control overwintering stages.

Spider mites cause yellowing or stippling but they are very difficult to see.

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.