

Prunus serrulata 'Kwanzan': Kwanzan Cherry¹

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Introduction

Kwanzan Cherry has double-pink, very attractive flowers and is usually purchased and planted for this reason. The upright-spreading form, reaching 15 to 25 feet tall, is quite attractive in many locations including near a patio or as a specimen away from lawn grass competition. The tree is glorious in flower and has been planted along with Yoshino Cherry in Washington, D.C., for the annual Cherry Blossom Festival. Kwanzan Cherry has good yellow fall color, does not bear fruit, but is troubled with pests. It prefers full sun, is intolerant of poor drainage, and is easily transplanted. However, useful life of the species is limited to about 15 to 25 years for 'Kwanzan', on a good site. But the tree is a joy during this short period and should be planted.



Figure 1. Middle-aged *Prunus serrulata* 'Kwanzan': Kwanzan Cherry
Credits: Ed Gilman

General Information

Scientific name: *Prunus serrulata*

Pronunciation: PROO-nus sair-yoo-LAY-tuh

Common name(s): Kwanzan Cherry

Family: *Rosaceae*

USDA hardiness zones: 5B through 9A (Fig. 2)

Origin: not native to North America

Invasive potential: little invasive potential

Uses: street without sidewalk; deck or patio; specimen; container or planter; trained as a standard; parking lot island < 100 sq ft; parking lot island 100-200 sq ft; parking lot island > 200 sq ft; tree lawn 3-4 feet wide; tree lawn 4-6 feet wide; tree lawn > 6 ft wide; highway median; Bonsai

Availability: not native to North America

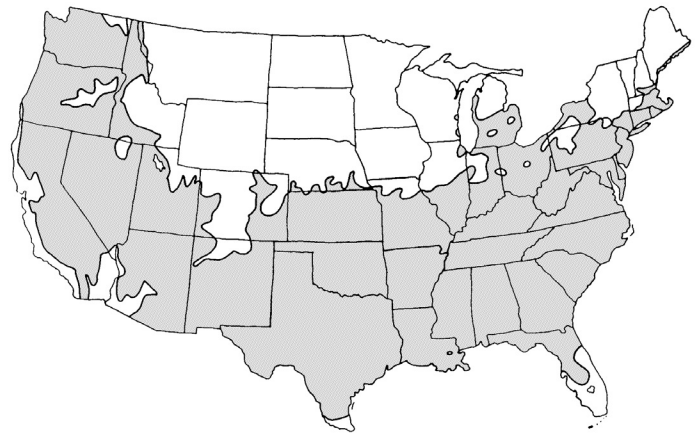


Figure 2. Range

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Description

Height: 15 to 25 feet

Spread: 15 to 25 feet

Crown uniformity: symmetrical

Crown shape: vase, upright/erect

Crown density: moderate

Growth rate: moderate

Texture: medium

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: alternate (Fig. 3)

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: serrate

Leaf shape: ovate, lanceolate

Leaf venation: pinnate, brachidodrome

Leaf type and persistence: deciduous

Leaf blade length: 2 to 4 inches, 4 to 8 inches

Leaf color: green

Fall color: yellow, orange, copper

Fall characteristic: showy



Figure 3. Foliage

Flower

Flower color: pink

Flower characteristics: very showy

Fruit

Fruit shape: round

Fruit length: unknown

Fruit covering: fleshy

Fruit color: unknown

Fruit characteristics: does not attract wildlife; 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: medium

Wood specific gravity: unknown

Culture

Light requirement: full sun

Soil tolerances: clay; sand; loam; acidic; alkaline; well-drained; occasionally wet

Drought tolerance: moderate

Aerosol salt tolerance: moderate

Other

Roots: not a problem

Winter interest: no

Outstanding tree: yes

Ozone sensitivity: unknown

Verticillium wilt susceptibility: susceptible

Pest resistance: sensitive to pests/diseases

Use and Management

Neither stress-tolerant or highly drought-tolerant, Kwanzan Cherry should be located on a site with loose soil and plenty of moisture. Not for an urban parking lot or exposed street tree planting where borers and other problems normally attack. It has some tolerance to salt, and tolerates clay if well-drained.

There are many other cultivars of Oriental Cherry but few are readily available. Some which may be locally available include: 'Amanogawa' ('Erecta') - semi-double, light pink, fragrant flowers, narrow columnar habit, about 20 feet tall; 'Fugenzo' ('James H. Veitch', 'Kofugen') - spreading habit, flowers 2.5 inches across, rose pink fading to light pink, double, 'Kofugen' sometimes described as having deeper color; 'Shirofugen' - rapid growth rate, young foliage bronze later turning green, flowers double, 2.5 inches across, pink fading to white; 'Shirotae' ('Mt. Fuji', 'Kojima') - flowers double to semi-double, white, ruffled, about 2.5 inches across; 'Shogetsu' - tree 15 feet tall, broad and flat-topped, flowers double, pale pink, center may be white, can be two inches across; 'Ukon' - young foliage bronze, flowers pale yellow, semi-double.

Pests

Aphids cause distortion of new growth, deposits of honey-dew, and sooty mold.

Borers attack flowering cherries. Keep trees healthy with regular fertilizer applications, and irrigation during drought.

Scales of several types infest cherries. Horticultural oil can be used to help control overwintering stages.

Spider mites cause yellowing or stippling but they are very difficult to see. They are usually noticed after leaves begin showing severe symptoms.

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

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.

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

Powdery mildew causes a white coating on the leaves, but control is seldom, if ever, warranted.