



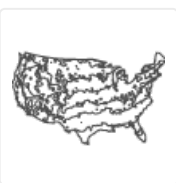
Nanking Cherry

Prunus tomentosa



Fragrant white spring flowers, shiny reddish-brown bark, and edible scarlet fruit make the Nanking cherry a favorite for mass plantings and borders. This is a vigorous, adaptable shrub particularly suited to the cold winters and hot summers of the central and northern plains of the United States and Canada. And the dense branching pattern means the shrub is also well-suited for use as a windbreak filler, hedge, or wildlife habitat.

The tart, tangy fruit ripen in mid- to late summer and can be eaten fresh or used in pies, jams, and jellies.



Hardiness Zones

The nanking cherry can be expected to grow in Hardiness Zones 3–7. [View Map](#)



Tree Type

This is an ornamental shrub, typically planted for the visual interest and beauty it can bring to landscape.

Mature Size



Growth Rate

This shrub grows at a medium rate, with height increases of 13–24" per year.



Sun Preference

Full sun is the ideal condition for this shrub, meaning it should get at least 6 hours of direct, unfiltered sunlight each day.



Soil Preference

The Nanking cherry adapts to a variety of soil conditions and pH levels. It prefers well-drained soil but will tolerate drought and can grow in semi-arid conditions.



Attributes

This shrub:

- Blooms in early spring, with pinkish buds opening up into pale pink or white flowers that are very fragrant.
- Produces tart and tangy scarlet-colored cherries that can be eaten fresh or used in pies, jams and jellies.
- Ripens July to August.
- Adapts well to cold winters, hot summers and drought.
- Develops a lustrous orange or reddish-brown bark that exfoliates in thin strips of vertical curls with age.
- Features simple leaves that are obovate to elliptic with unequally toothed margins, dull dark green color and downy hair on the underside.



- Grows in a rounded shape
- Can be planted 4–5' apart to form a hedge.
- Serves as dwarfing stock for cherry trees.



Wildlife Value

The shrub provides habitat, and the fruit attract birds and other wildlife.



History/Lore

The Nanking cherry is native to central Asia. It was introduced to the North America in 1882. Other common names are Manchu cherry, downy cherry, mountain cherry, Mongolian cherry, Chinese bush cherry and hedge cherry. The word *tomentosa* indicates the hairy nature of the underside of the leaf of this tree. Its branches can be cut in mid-winter and forced to bloom indoors in early spring.