

All-purpose *Prunus*

BY TRACY ILENE MILLER



Prunus × yedoensis 'Akebono' has masses of large, semi-double, pink flowers that fade slightly as they age.

PHOTO BY DOREEN WYNJA

OREGON IS THE nation's top grower of flowering trees, logging almost \$50 million in sales in 2014. Two best-sellers are flowering cherry (\$8.2 million) and flowering plum (\$3.1 million).

"After a long and dreary winter, they remind us of the renewal of spring," said Joe Dixon, an independent sales and field representative for Carlton Plants in Dayton, Oregon. "The flowering trees stand out from a distance, and a long row of them brightens up and adds beauty to a stark landscape. It is like going from a long night to a beautiful sunrise."

Flowering cherries have the advantage of thriving in most temperate zones across the

United States and particularly in the Pacific Northwest, where historically they have been planted in larger commercial and residential designs. According to one estimate from Portland Parks and Recreation's Urban Forestry division, 6 percent of the city's trees are flowering cherries.

But in recent history, sales of these two spring stunners have been waning in commercial and urban forestry circles, even as they still capture the hearts of residential customers.

Four factors have affected sales of flowering cherry and plum trees: The Great Recession of the late 2000s; urban forestry plans for diversity versus monoculture in replacement >>

All-purpose *Prunus*

Prunus serrulata 'Kwanzan' is the most heavily planted cherry in the Pacific Northwest and the United States. PHOTO BY DOREEN WYNJA

species; the move toward smaller or more upright trees; and the desire for lower maintenance trees with drought tolerance and disease resistance.

“Plum and cherries have a reputation for high maintenance,” said Jill Rodriguez, B&B container sales manager at Arrowhead Ornamentals in Hubbard, Oregon. Plums in particular have a reputation for suckering and fruit drop.

“Some of the older ones are messy, but the new ones are not,” Dixon added.

Newer varieties of flowering plum provide enough fruit to attract birds without being messy, and newer varieties of flowering cherry are bred for disease resistance.

“Cities are looking for alternatives,” said Nancy Buley, director of communications at J. Frank Schmidt & Son Co. in Boring, Oregon. “The move toward achieving a greater diversity of species in the urban forest canopy is pushing down demand for *Prunus* in favor of less common trees.”

And yet, flowering cherry and plum trees are still used as street trees on the East Coast, “which you don’t see so much here [in the Northwest]” Buley said. “We do a fair number of 6-foot grafts that are suitable for street tree applications, so they can be branched higher.”

Although the urban applications for flowering cherry and plum trees have lessened, they are still in high demand with



homeowners nationwide.

“We are selling lots and lots of cherry,” Buley said. “They are a great crop for us. There’s less municipal demand, but homeowners, the residential market, they love them.”

The residential customer loves them

for the flower displays and the range of bloom times, starting as early as late February and going through late April.

There is a historical connection, too — to the flowering cherry trees received in 1912 by the United States from Japan. Those trees stand as a monument to >>

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| <p>AQUATIC BIOTICS <i>Biological Pond, Lake & Fountain Treatment</i></p> <p>All Natural Biologic for Healthy, Clear, Pond Water... SAFE TO FISH, PLANTS & OTHER AQUATIC LIFE!</p> <p>100% ALL NATURAL! Contains ... Bio-plex™ Cultured Beneficial Bacteria & Enzymes. 100% Safe & Effective.</p> <p>BENEFITS: Improve & Maintain Water Clarity & Quality • Promotes Healthier Fish, Plants & Other Aquatic Life • Effectively Breaks Down & Prevents Dead Algae, Organic Sludge, Scum, Sediment, Leaves & Much More • Eliminates & Prevents Noxious Odors From Algae, Fish Food, Excrement & Nutrient Build-Up • Promotes Superior System Filtration Functions.</p> | <p>TRANSPLANT CONCENTRATE PLANT ENHANCER</p> <p>REduces PLANT MORTALITY</p> <p>Use... (1) Where Plant Decline or Failure is NOT an Option! (2) To Successfully SUMMER-DIG, INSTALL, or MAINTAIN Ornamentals under Hot, Harsh, Severe & Adverse Conditions.</p> <p>Concentrated Bio-Stimulant Root Drench... Seakelp-Humic-Vitamin & Enzyme Complex</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reduces stress symptoms 2. Greatly improves moisture retention 3. Speeds fibrous root mass formation 4. Critical for Successful “Summer Digging” 5. Rehabilitate declining plants 6. Helps plants survive hot, dry conditions <p>RELIABLE, EFFECTIVE, INEXPENSIVE PLANT SURVIVAL INSURANCE! “Using Bio-Plex with our plantings has reduced our need to replace plants by 90%. In one instance Bio-Plex made us \$10,000!” -Legend Landscaping</p> | <p>TREE RING™ <i>Makes every drop of water count!</i></p> <p>Regular Size 25 gallons</p> <p>Junior Size 10 Gallons</p> <p>Compact... Nest for easy storage.</p> <p>PLUMLEE NURSERY PRODUCTS</p> <p>503.985.7932 joy@plumleenureseryproducts.com Available at: Marion Ag</p> |
| <p>NATURAL PEST SOLUTIONS <i>Are Repellent Failures Frustrating You? DON'T GIVE UP</i></p> <p>Keep deer, rabbits, moles, voles, insects and woodchucks away from plants!</p> <p>YES! REPELLENTS That Really Work! Natural Pest Solutions 1 GALLON CONCENTRATE BOTTLE & 48 OZ. RTU BOTTLES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woodchuck & Rodent Solution • Deer Solution • Tick & Flea Solution • Mosquito Solution • Plant Solutions | | |

FIND

WHAT YOU'RE

MISSING

AT

NurseryGuide.com



Whether you're looking for ten plants or a truckload,
you'll find what you need at NurseryGuide.com.

NurseryGuide.com 

A product of the Oregon Association of Nurseries and its members.

All-purpose *Prunus*

Prunus incisa 'Little Twist' was named for its stems and shoots that zig-zag. A moderate grower to 6-7 feet tall, 'Little Twist' is an excellent choice for patio planters, small gardens and courtyards. PHOTO BY DOREEN WYNJA

spring and draw more than 700,000 visitors each year to Washington, D.C.

When people see them in bloom, it leaves an impression.

In early April this year, Jim Browne at Sester Farms in Gresham, Oregon, received half a dozen calls from garden centers in the Midwest looking for flowering cherry. The catalyst for those calls? The spectacular display of flowering cherry trees in our nation's capital, he said, where customers had recently visited. They wanted to recreate that particular look in their own gardens.

Oldies but goodies

In a horticulture world where new cultivars are constantly sought, flowering cherry and plum remain popular.

Reviewing *The Handbook of*



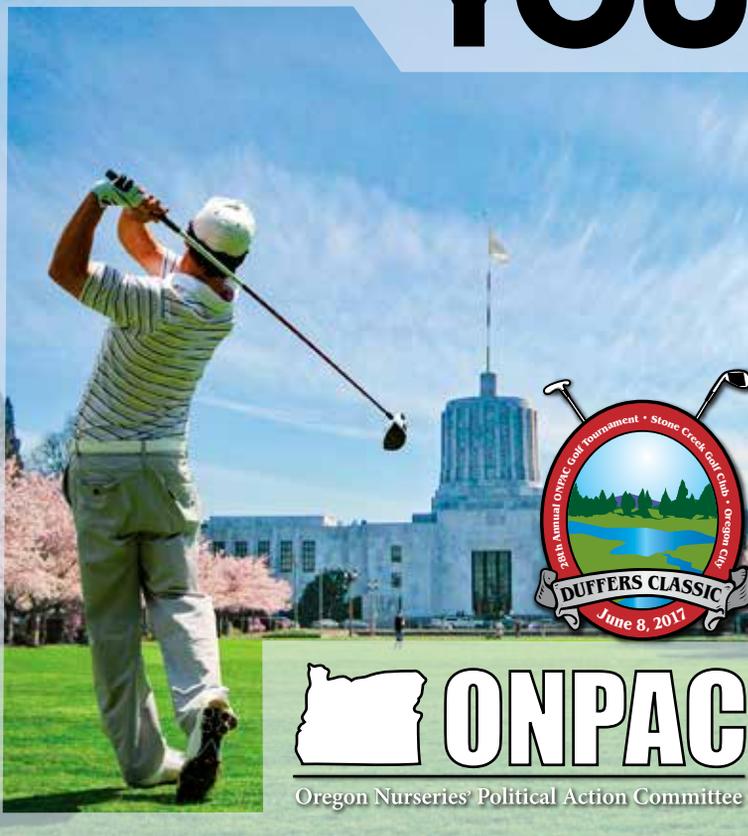
Landscape Tree Cultivars by Willet N. Wandell (1994, East Prairie Publishing Co.), Buley was surprised to find that "some of the oldest cultivars remain the most popular and widely grown and planted," she noted.

Buley said the top sellers among the 'oldies but goodies' in order of sales volume are: *P. serrulata* 'Kwanzan' (1913, EH Wilson), *P. × yedoensis* 'Yoshino' (1902), *P. 'Okame'* (1946, Morris Arboretum of England) and *P. × yedoensis* 'Akebono' (1925, W.B. Clarke of California).

P. cerasifera 'Thundercloud', introduced by Housewearts Nursery (Oregon) in 1937, is J. Frank Schmidt's and Carlton Plant's top-selling plum.

P. 'Kwanzan' is the most heavily planted cherry in the Pacific Northwest and the United States. It has a showy deep

THANKS TO YOU



You came. You swung. You birdied. We're grateful for all who participated in the 2017 Duffers Classic and helped raise money for ONPAC. Here's an extra big "thank you" for our sponsors:



Cart Sponsors — Anderson Pots, Wilbur-Ellis Company

Key Hole Sponsors — Arrowhead Ornamentals LLC, Brooks Tree Farm, J. Frank Schmidt & Son Co., JLPN Inc., Robinson Nursery Inc.

Par 3 Hole Sponsor — Al's Home & Garden

Hole Sponsors — Aldrich CPAs & Advisors LLP, Brentano's Tree Farm LLC, Dayton Bag & Burlap, Grimm's Fuel Company, KG Farms Inc., Jordan Ramis PC, Leonard Adams Insurance Inc., OAN Sunset Chapter, Pivot Group, Simnitt Nursery, Surface Nursery Inc., Syngenta, T & R Company, Wurdinger Manufacturing Inc.

Beverage Sponsors — Brooks Tree Farm, Drakes Crossing Nursery

Prize Sponsors — Anderson Pots, Park's Nursery, Wooden Shoe Tulip Farm & Vineyard

Putting Green Sponsors — Alpha Nursery Inc., Ernst Irrigation, F & B Farms and Nursery, KeyBank, Rabo AgriFinance

Driving Range Sponsor — OAN Clackamas Chapter

Longest Drive Sponsors — Country Financial, OBC Northwest Inc.

KP Sponsors — Don Marjama Nursery Co. Inc., Hans Nelson & Sons Nursery

PGA Professional Shot Sponsor — ProCal / The H C Companies

Snow Fountains® Weeping Cherry is very disease and insect resistant. It also boasts naturally weeping branches covered with showy white flowers. Ornamental red berries follow in summer. PHOTO BY DOREEN WYNJA

pink double bloom and an upright habit as a young tree and spreads as it matures; the height is close to the spread, at about 20–30 feet, with a V shape. It is a mid-season bloomer with no fruit and bronzy orange fall color.

‘Kwanzan’ and ‘Yoshino’ are the varieties of flowering cherry planted in Washington, D.C. ‘Yoshino’ has upright, single white fragrant blossoms, insignificant fruit, and matures at 10–20 feet, with good fall color.

‘Akebono’ is especially popular in the western United States. This variety “tends to have more pink, close to the original ‘Yoshino’ cherries in D.C., which affects customers’ choice. What they see, they want,” said Carlos Oliveira, general manager at Blue Heron Farm in Corvallis, Oregon.

‘Akebono’ is the flowering cherry



you’ll see on Portland’s Tom McCall Waterfront Park. It also has the distinction of proven disease resistance, even in the wet Pacific Northwest, which earned it a Great Plant Pick designation in 2003.

Compact varieties

So revered are ‘Kwanzan’ and ‘Yoshino’ that even the average lifespan of 35–50 years doesn’t deter people from planting them. However, their larger size does stop some homeowners.

Compact varieties are seldom used as street trees, but they have major landscaping potential elsewhere.

Snow Fountains® (*P. × subhirtella* ‘Snofozam’), for instance, is a weeping cherry that tops out at 12–15 feet. It is popular not only for its compact habit but also its showy, fragrant white flowers ➤



IS THERE MORE GREEN IN THE HOUSE?

Energy upgrades in your greenhouses can yield more than energy savings. They can boost productivity and earn cash incentives from Energy Trust of Oregon, too.



Talk to your greenhouse vendor, or visit www.energytrust.org/ag for more information.

Serving customers of Portland General Electric, Pacific Power, NW Natural, Cascade Natural Gas and Avista.





**BIRINGER
NURSERY**

Wholesale Growers of
**Fruit, Flowering &
 Shade Trees**
Deciduous Shrubs
Espalier Apple & Pear
Combination Fruit Trees
**Dwarf Fruit Cherries
 on Gisela™**
Dwarf Flowering Cherries
Frost Peach®
 PO Box 2809
 Mt. Vernon, WA 98273
 (360) 848-5151 Fax (360) 848-5959

SAVE THE DATE
2017 OAN Convention
November 3 & 4, 2017

Salishan Spa & Golf Resort,
 Gleneden Beach, Oregon



Enjoy the lively Hospitality Suites party, President's Awards Banquet, panel discussions and business meetings focused on important issues facing you, our members.

Registration and room reservations will open in September. Sponsorship opportunities available.

For more information, contact Allan Niemi, OAN director of events, at aniemi@oan.org or 503-682-5089.

All-purpose *Prunus*

on bare stems and golden autumn color.

Pink Snow Showers™ (*P. × 'Pisnshzam'*) is slightly taller at 20–25 feet, yet still fits within smaller landscapes and wows with double pink blooms and a deep golden fall color.

Oliveira said weeping varieties make great landscaping statements, but should be planted in situations where no one will walk underneath them. “Snow Fountains can be a terrific impact plant as it gets older,” Oliveira said. It “is grown top-grafted to create an umbrella, but also it can be grafted lower to the ground for a serpentine look, generating a different kind of plant. I saw one grown up against a wall, and it was spectacular.”

A version of ‘Kwanzan’, *P. serrulata* ‘Royal Burgundy’, was discovered by Frank Parks of Speer & Sons Nursery in Woodburn, Oregon, and released commercially in 1990. ‘Royal Burgundy’ is a slower grower than ‘Kwanzan’ and matures 10 feet shorter than its parent, topping out at 20 feet, and has rich dark purple foliage against darker pink blooms for an impressive display.

P. incisa ‘Kojono-mai’ is also worthy of greater consideration, Oliveira said. It matures almost at a shrub height of 5 feet tall by 5–6 feet wide, and with delicate single, light pink flowers and a beautiful dark mahogany fall color.

“Cherries have great fall color, although people don’t think of them as much for that,” Oliveira said. “There are also selections that have incredible bark, even if the blossoms are not as impressive; for instance, *P. serrulata* ‘Tibetica’ or birch bark cherry. I saw one in a Japanese garden years ago, and it looked like burnished copper.”

P. serrulata ‘Shirofugen’ blooms late, after the spring rains, making it less prone to diseases than other early-flowering cherries. Disease and drought tolerance are sought-after traits because homeowners don’t want to spray and municipalities don’t want to water, especially street trees.

Oliveira said ‘Shirofugen’ is a little more vigorous than ‘Mt. Fuji’, with the

Traditionally, cherries are all about the blossom, but it’s the rich, coppery-brown bark on Tibetan cherry (*Prunus serrula* ‘Tibetica’) that draws the eye.
 PHOTO BY JASON CRAFT



same spreading habit and about 10 feet taller, maturing at 30 feet.

Fresh cherries

Among compact cherries, everyone is talking about *Prunus incisa* ‘Carlton LT’ Little Twist®, introduced by Carlton Plants in 2009. Touted for residential plantings, Little Twist is a dwarf flowering cherry that offers a lot for its 8-by-8-foot frame. Its name derives from the attractive zigzagging branches. In spring, clustered white flowers with pink centers can last three to four weeks; in fall, leaves turn orange to deep maroon.

“Of the flowering cherries, it has the most all-season interest of any of them,” Dixon said. “Add in the fact that it is dwarf and fits in the smaller landscape, that makes it quite adaptable and usable.”

J. Frank Schmidt & Son Co. introduced Pink Flair® in 2004, and the new variety has been gaining on older varieties ever since, Buley said. “It’s better than we thought it would be. For wet spring climates, it has really good foliage qualities.”

After trialing it for 10 years, JFS chose this tree for its foliage, which stays good-looking over time, as well as its vigor, attractive bark and upright stature. It blooms ➤➤

BE FAR FROM ORDINARY

You are unique.
But what about your business?
Farwest is here to help your
unique business succeed.

**Come to Farwest,
the biggest show in the West.**

NEW SHOW DAYS AND HOURS:

August 23-25, 2017

Noon - 5pm Wednesday

10am - 5pm Thursday

10am - 2pm Friday



BRIE ARTHUR
Foodscape Revolutionary
Farwest Speaker

FARWEST
PORTLAND 2017



OREGON
ASSOCIATION OF
NURSERIES

Farwest: Far From Ordinary
www.FarwestShow.com



Healthy plants, healthy profits.

Chris Fox
Cell: 971-245-9497
Christopher.fox@cpsagu.com

CPS Cornelius Branch
Office: 503-640-2371
Fax: 503-640-5973

Premier Supplier of Nursery Products



- **Shipping Materials** - Stickers, shelves and pallets made to your specs, pallet repair boards, shipping gates, tilt sticks, used pallets
- **Packing Supplies** - Shrink wrap, banding
- **Planting Stakes** - Multiple sizes available
- **Treated Lumber** - Multiple sizes available



503-434-5525

1726 SW Highway 18, McMinnville, OR 97218 • www.dstakemill.com

6152

*Your contribution today
helps prepare the nursery
industry leaders of tomorrow.*



**OREGON
NURSERIES
FOUNDATION**

Contact the Oregon Association of Nurseries for more information:
503-682-5089 or 888-283-7219.

The ONF is a nonprofit 503(c)3 corporation. Donations may be tax-deductible; consult a qualified tax attorney or accountant.

All-purpose *Prunus*

later than other flowering cherries, so buds are less likely to get nipped by frost.

“It’s like the Sargent columnar cherry, but not as narrow,” Buley said. And it is hardy down to USDA Zone 3.

The new weeping cherry with bright pink flowers Buley’s really excited about is Pink Cascade®. It has fine-textured foliage and good vigor on a graceful 12-by-12-foot frame. It has wide market appeal, she said, for its good heat resistance that does well in the Southwest, where many cherries don’t.

Last year JFS introduced First Blush® cherry, an upright and narrow grower to 25 feet by 12 feet — “but not too tight,” Buley said. It has fragrant and dense semi-double flowers, dense foliage and good fall color — attributes that would make it a good small street tree.

New plums

“A lot of people look their noses down at them, because they’re short-lived and they tend to have storm damage problem, but when you see plum in the spring you tend to go, ‘Ah!’” Buley said.

Although JFS carries the same number of plum varieties as they do cherry, their inventory is twice as many cherry trees. And that is similar for other nurseries, even as plum shines for its foliage display and compact habit.

Featuring deep purple foliage and light pink flowers, *P. cerasifera* ‘Krauter Vesuvius’ is a moderate grower to 20 feet. A top seller for many growers, it handles heat better than *P. cerasifera* ‘Thundercloud’, the second most popular plum, and both have little to no fruit production and need little to no pruning.

P. cerasifera ‘Purple Pony’ is an underutilized dwarf flowering plum with incredible heat tolerance and sterile habit that avoids messiness. ‘Purple Pony’ is also stronger, and fits a smaller yard, maturing at 10–15 feet. ©

Tracy Ilene Miller is a freelance writer and editor who covers several topics, including gardening. She can be reached at tracyilenemiller@gmail.com.