

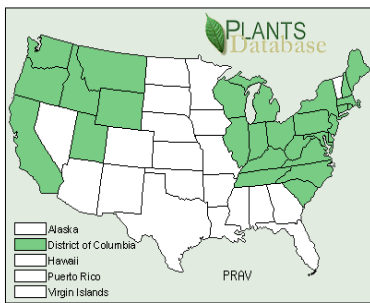


Sweet Cherry *Prunus avium* (L.) L.

Common Names: bird cherry, sweet cherry

Native Origin: Europe and Asia

Description: A deciduous tree in the rose family (*Rosaceae*) growing to a height of 50 feet and having a broad round crown. The smooth bark is gray-brown with long horizontal lenticels and often peels. The leaves are simple, alternate, oval to obovate, 2 - 5 inches long, toothed on the margins and have 2 small glands at the base of the blade. Flowers are white and appear in clusters of 3 - 5 in early spring. The fleshy fruit is dark red to black, 1/2 - 1 inch across and edible. Fruits contain a large pit (stone) and mature in early to mid summer. Plants reproduce vegetatively and by seeds.



Habitat: Sweet Cherry prefers non-acid rich soils. It is found in woods and hedgerows. It grows in full sun to part shade.

Distribution: This species is reported from states shaded on Plants Database map. It is reported invasive in DE, MA, MD, NC, NJ, NY, OR, PA, RI, TN, VA, and WA.

Ecological Impacts: Trees have escaped intentional plantings. They shade out forest understories and displace native vegetation. Birds and squirrels eat the fruit, and are responsible in part for the naturalization of this tree from gardens into the wild in eastern and mid-western North America.

Toxicity: As with native cherries the wilted leaves, stems, and seeds are toxic. Symptoms of gasping, weakness, excitement, pupil dilation, spasms, convulsions, coma, and respiratory failure can occur if ingested.

Control and Management:



- **Manual-** Pull seedlings and small or shallow-rooted plants when soil is moist. Dig out larger plants, including the root systems. Use a spading fork or weed wrench for trees or shrubs. Cut down the tree. Grind out the stump, or clip off re-growth.
- **Chemical-** It can be effectively controlled using any of several readily available general use herbicides such as glyphosate or triclopyr. Follow label and state requirements.
- **Natural Enemies-** Cherry trees are susceptible to a large number of insect and disease pests. Diseases include bacterial canker, rots, scab, crown gall and powdery mildew. Insect pests include aphids, caterpillars, scale and flies.

References: www.forestimages.org, <http://plants.usda.gov>, www.nps.gov/plants/alien/list/a.htm
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