



# *Prunus x yedoensis* 'Akebono' Daybreak Yoshino Cherry<sup>1</sup>

Edward F. Gilman and Dennis G. Watson<sup>2</sup>

## INTRODUCTION

Yoshino Cherry grows moderately fast to 25 feet tall and a bit wider, has beautiful bark marked with prominent lenticels but is a relatively short-lived tree (Fig. 1). It has upright branching when young forming more horizontal branching with age, making it ideal for planting along walks and over patios. The white to soft pink flowers which occur in early spring before the leaves develop are sometimes damaged by late frosts or very windy conditions. This is one of the species (along with 'Kwanzan' Cherry) in Washington, DC, which makes such a show each spring.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

**Scientific name:** *Prunus x yedoensis* 'Akebono'

**Pronunciation:** PROO-nus x yed-oh-EN-sis

**Common name(s):** Daybreak Yoshino Cherry

**Family:** *Rosaceae*

**USDA hardiness zones:** 5B through 8A (Fig. 2)

**Origin:** not native to North America

**Uses:** Bonsai; recommended for buffer strips around parking lots or for median strip plantings in the highway; near a deck or patio; shade tree; specimen; no proven urban tolerance

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

## DESCRIPTION

**Height:** 25 to 35 feet

**Spread:** 25 to 40 feet

**Crown uniformity:** symmetrical canopy with a regular (or smooth) outline, and individuals have more

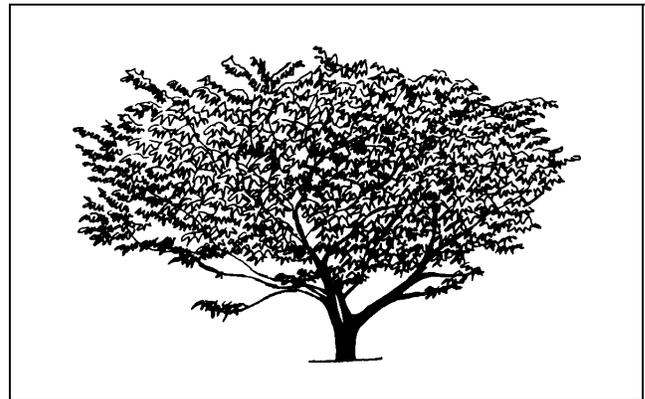


Figure 1. Mature Daybreak Yoshino Cherry.

or less identical crown forms

**Crown shape:** round; vase shape

**Crown density:** moderate

**Growth rate:** medium

**Texture:** medium

## Foliage

**Leaf arrangement:** alternate (Fig. 3)

**Leaf type:** simple

**Leaf margin:** double serrate; serrate

**Leaf shape:** elliptic (oval); obovate; ovate

**Leaf venation:** banchidodrome; pinnate

**Leaf type and persistence:** deciduous

**Leaf blade length:** 2 to 4 inches

**Leaf color:** green

**Fall color:** yellow

**Fall characteristic:** showy

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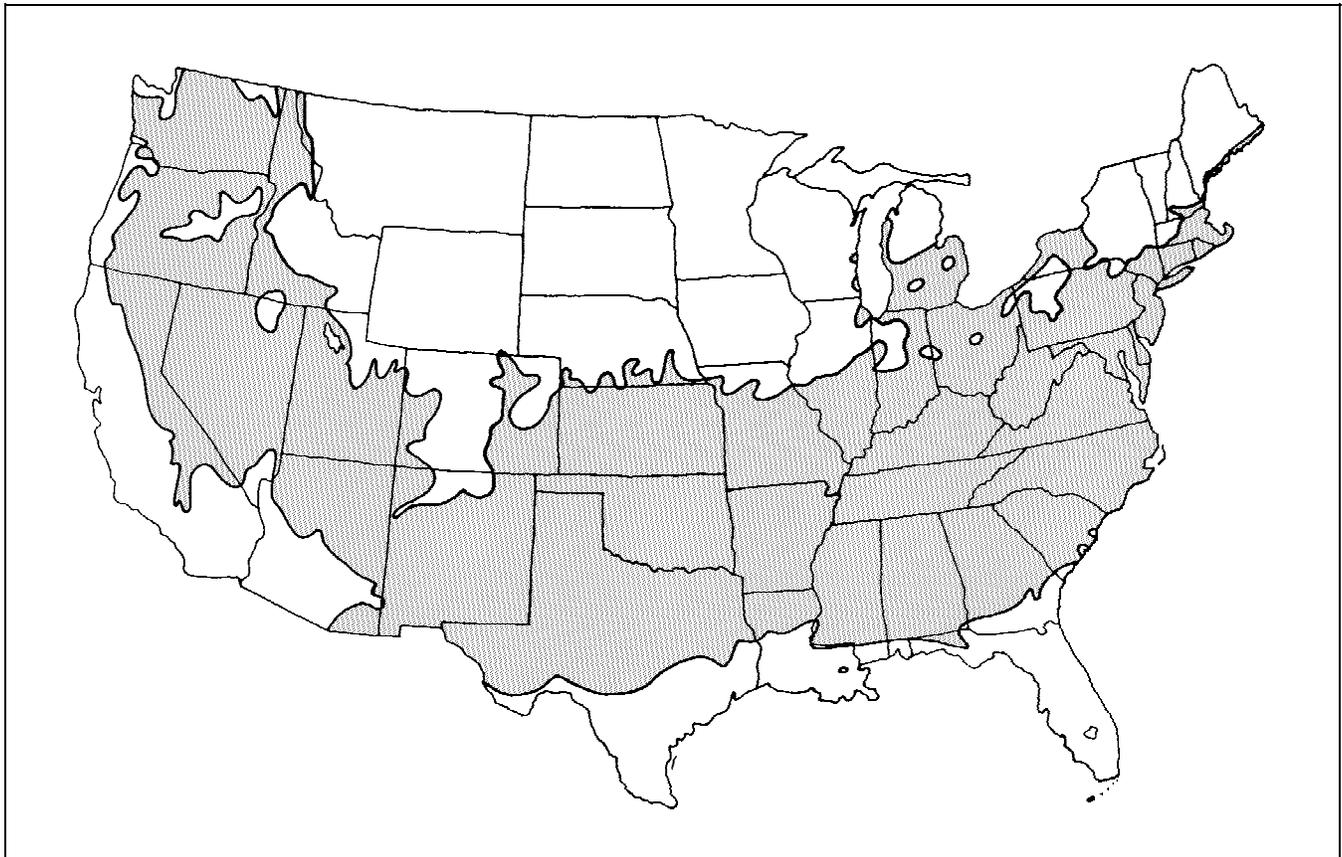


Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

### Flower

**Flower color:** pink; white

**Flower characteristics:** spring flowering; very showy

### Fruit

**Fruit shape:** round

**Fruit length:** .5 to 1 inch

**Fruit covering:** fleshy

**Fruit color:** black

**Fruit characteristics:** attracts birds; inconspicuous and not showy; no significant litter problem

### Trunk and Branches

**Trunk/bark/branches:** bark is thin and easily damaged from mechanical impact; droop as the tree grows, and will require pruning for vehicular or pedestrian clearance beneath the canopy; showy trunk; should be grown with a single leader; no thorns

**Pruning requirement:** requires pruning to develop strong structure

**Breakage:** resistant

**Current year twig color:** brown

**Current year twig thickness:** thin

### Culture

**Light requirement:** tree grows in full sun

**Soil tolerances:** clay; loam; sand; acidic; well-drained

**Drought tolerance:** moderate

**Aerosol salt tolerance:** none

**Soil salt tolerance:** poor

### Other

**Roots:** surface roots are usually not a problem

**Winter interest:** tree has winter interest due to unusual form, nice persistent fruits, showy winter trunk, or winter flowers

**Outstanding tree:** tree has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more

**Invasive potential:** little, if any, potential at this time

**Verticillium wilt susceptibility:** susceptible

**Pest resistance:** very sensitive to one or more pests or diseases which can affect tree health or aesthetics

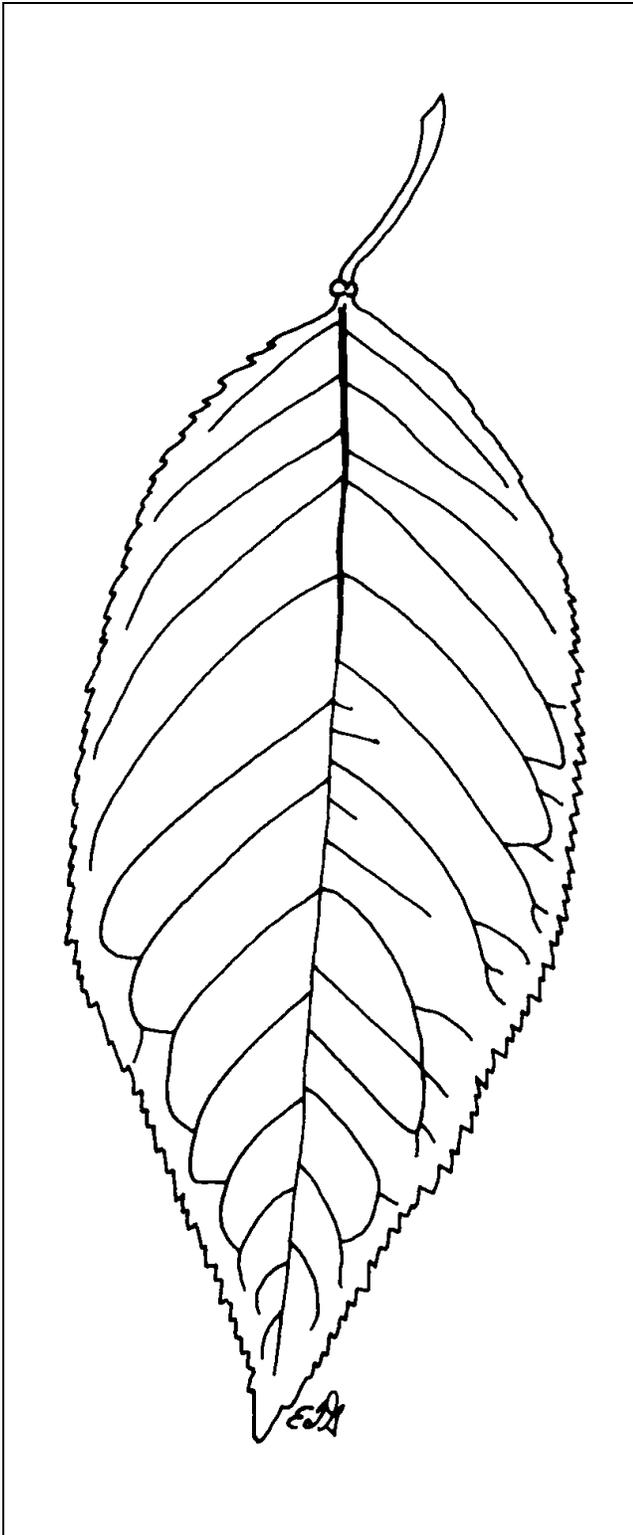


Figure 3. Foliage of Daybreak Yoshino Cherry.

### USE AND MANAGEMENT

Best used as a specimen or near the deck or patio for shade, Yoshino Cherry also works nicely along walks or near a water feature. Not a street or parking

lot tree due to drought-sensitivity. Large specimens take on a weeping habit with delicate branchlets arranged on upright-spreading branches affixed to a short, stout trunk. A lovely addition to a sunny spot where a beautiful specimen is needed. Winter form, yellow fall color, and pretty bark make this a year round favorite.

Provide good drainage in an acidic soil for best growth. Crowns become one-sided unless they receive light from all around the plant, so locate in full sun. Select another tree to plant if soil is poorly drained but otherwise Yoshino Cherry adapts to clay or loam. Roots should be kept moist and should not be subjected to prolonged drought.

Other cultivars include: 'Perpendens' - irregularly pendulous branches; 'Shidare Yoshino' ('Perpendens') - irregularly pendulous branches.

### Pests

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

Borers attack flowering cherries under stress. Keep trees healthy with regular fertilizer applications.

Scales of several types infest prunus. Horticultural oil can be used to help control scale.

Spider mites cause yellowing or stippling but are very difficult to see. They are usually recognized only after plant symptoms are quite advanced.

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.

A fungus causes reddish spots which drop out leaving shot holes. Once the hole appear the leaves may drop. The disease is worse in wet weather.

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.

Yoshino Cherry may be subject to witches broom. Branches are deformed and clusters of small branches form. Infected branches bloom and leaf out earlier. Brooms are pruned out, to help control the disease.