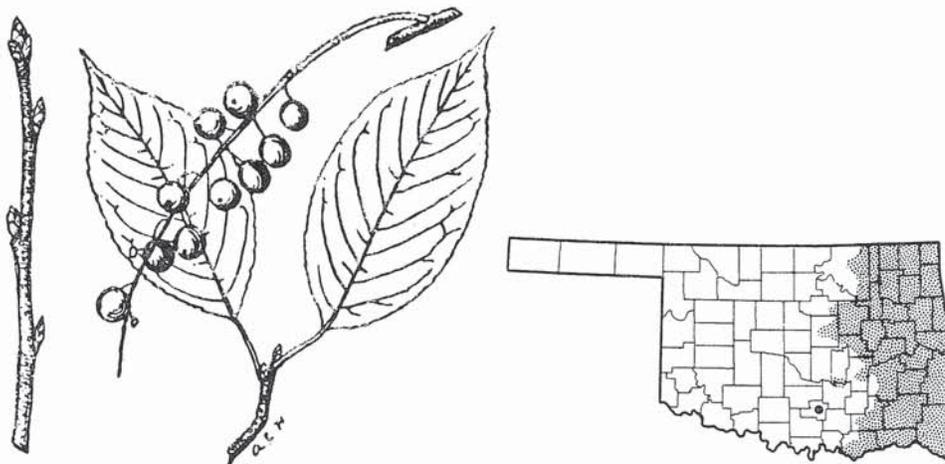


## 102. BLACK CHERRY

*Prunus serotina* Ehrh.; wild cherry.

Medium-sized to large tree 50-70 ft (15-21 m) high and 1½ ft (0.5 m) in diameter, with narrow oblong crown; foliage aromatic with odor and taste of almond when crushed. Twigs slender, red brown, with several scales, hairless. Buds small, blunt, shiny red brown, hairless.



Leaves elliptical, 2-5 in (5-13 cm) long, 1-1½ in (2.5-4 cm) wide, *long-pointed*, base short-pointed with 1-2 dark red glands, edges finely *saw-toothed* with *curved or blunt teeth*, slightly thickened, above *shiny dark green* and hairless, beneath light green and often hairy along midvein, turning yellow or reddish in autumn.

Flowers *many* along spreading or drooping *axis* (raceme), in unbranched clusters of 4-6 in (10-15 cm) ending a leafy twig in late spring, ⅜ in (1 cm) across the 5 spreading rounded white petals.

Fruits *many* small round *cherries* (drupes) ⅜ in (1 cm) in diameter, *dark red turning blackish*, with slightly bitter juicy edible pulp and rounded yellowish stone, maturing in late summer.

Bark dark gray or blackish, smoothish with horizontal lines, becoming irregularly fissured and scaly, exposing reddish brown inner bark, bitter and aromatic.

Wood light to dark reddish brown with thin whitish sapwood, mostly diffuse porous, fine-textured, moderately heavy (sp. gr. .47), moderately hard, strong, stiff, resistant to decay or durable. Principal uses are furniture, cabinetwork, paneling, patterns, professional and scientific instruments, handles, woodenware, and toys.

Common and widespread in moist soil, flood plain and oak-hickory forests, e. third of Okla. Widespread in e. half of U.S. and adjacent Canada; varieties in sw. U.S. and s. in mountains to Mexico and Guatemala. Zone 3.

Black cherry is the largest tree and most important species of the cherries and plums native in continental U.S. It is one of the most valuable native hardwoods of e. U.S. Planted for shade and ornament. The edible wild cherries are consumed by wildlife and used for jelly and wine. Wild cherry syrup, from the bark is a cough medicine.