

Biology & Invasive Potential

- Outcompetes native vegetation, disrupting moose habitat and food availability
- Disrupts food webs by limiting insects which serve as a food source for salmon and other fish
- Trimming & cutting European Bird Cherry stimulates growth!
- Root suckers and fallen trees can create thickets of new trees
- Produces cyanogenic glycoside that has poisoned moose calves in Anchorage



Distribution & Abundance

- Native to Northern Europe and Asia. Survives prolonged temperatures to -33°F
- The northern most extent in Alaska is the south side of the Brooks Range, north of the Arctic Circle
- In Alaska, it has been planted in residential landscapes, parks, and at a few remote cabins
- It is rapidly invading riparian stream sides and natural forests in most regions in Alaska
- Takes over the understory of forests and forms thickets where native plants once grew

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Contact Information

For plant alternatives or if you are outside of Anchorage contact:

State of Alaska DNR - Plant Materials Center
Invasive Plants Program Coordinator
dnr.invasive.plants@alaska.gov
www.plants.alaska.gov
907-745-4469

For control and removal volunteer opportunities in Anchorage:

State of Alaska DNR - Community Forestry Program
communityforestry@alaska.gov
907-269-8465

For additional information:

UAF Cooperative Extension Service
UAF-ForestHealth@alaska.edu
www.alaskainvasives.org
(Outside of Anchorage) 1-877-520-5211
(In Anchorage) 907-786-6315

USDA Forest Service

www.fs.fed.us/r10/spf/fhp
907-743-9563

1-877-INVASIV
(468-2748)



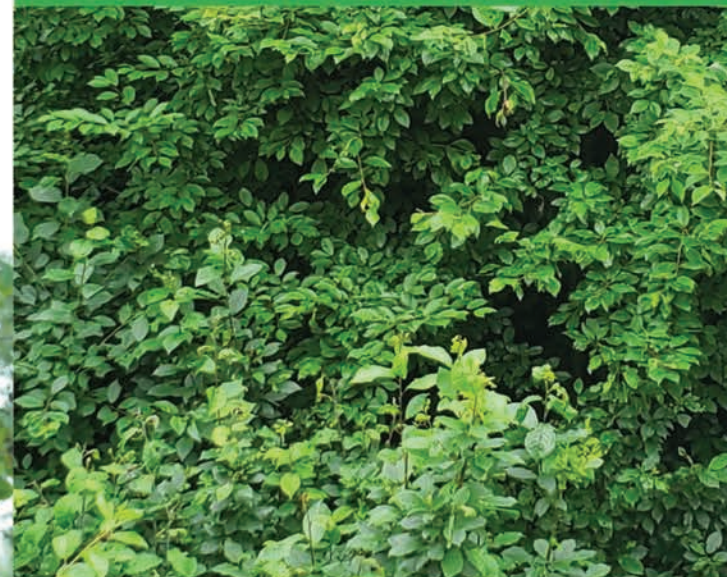
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Looks good from afar...



...but it's far from good

This beauty is a beast!



European Bird Cherry
Prunus padus

Identification

European Bird Cherry (*Prunus padus*) is a small deciduous tree also known as the Chokecherry or Mayday tree.

Growth

- Grows up to 35 feet tall
- Sprouts from its trunk, stems & roots when cut
- Is rounded in shape, has low branching crowns, and its multi-stemmed growth can form dense thickets.



Bark

- Bark is grey to brown & relatively smooth
- Visible pores on the bark are called lenticels

Leaves

- Leaves are ovate, elliptical, & thinning at the tip
- Leaves are dark green & alternate with 2 small glands at the base of the stem
- Edges of the leaves are sharply serrated



Flowers

- White, small, & very aromatic
- Arranged in drooping cylindrical clusters called racemes
- In Alaska, blooms are seen between late May and early June



Fruits

- Small, bitter black cherries ripen in late summer
- Birds eat the cherries & spread the seeds to new areas



Management & Control

Cutting alone is not an effective solution because this tree readily re-sprouts from stumps, stems, and roots (including fragments)!

Seedlings and small trees can be pulled by hand. Trees up to 2" in diameter can be removed with a tool called an "Uprooter™" as shown below. Note that ALL of the roots must be removed, and the tree disposed of, or it will re-sprout!



Alternative Ornamental Trees for Alaska

Depending on your needs there are many alternative trees commercially available. Additional ornamental trees suitable for your local hardiness zone can be found at www.alaskaplants.org. When you remove a tree plant a new one!

*Be sure to choose a variety that corresponds with your hardiness zone. Contact the Alaska Community Forestry Program with questions.



Amur Maple (*Acer ginnala*)
Brilliant fall color, produces small white flowers and winged seeds.



Crab Apple (*Malus* spp.)
Cultivars vary in flower color as white, pink, or maroon. Many have great fall colors & produce sweet fruit for jelly or sauce.

Other varieties for Alaska:
M.x ranetka, M. x 'Selkirk'



Amur Chokecherry (*Prunus maackii*)
Showy white flowers and beautiful copper-colored exfoliating bark. Produces small black fruits that can be used for jams or jellies.

No longer recommended
For other Alternatives visit
<https://www.uaf.edu/ces/garden/landscape-plants/index.php>

Systemic herbicides are the most effective way to control European Bird Cherry because they are absorbed directly into the tree's vascular system to kill ALL parts of the plant so it cannot re-sprout. Certain herbicides can be applied to a cut stump to prevent the stump and roots from sprouting. UAF Cooperative Extension can provide additional information on herbicides or a commercial pesticide applicator certified in Alaska can be hired to apply herbicides for you.