

BLACK CHERRY

Prunus serotina Ehrh.

OTHER COMMON NAMES: Wild cherry, Wild black cherry, Rum ~~cherry~~, Cherry,

FORM: Commonly 50-75 feet high, trunk diameter 2-3 feet, may attain a height of 110 feet, diameter 5 feet; in the forest the bole is long, clean, with little taper, while in the open the trunk is usually short and the crown irregularly oblong.

BARK: Mature bark thin, dark reddish-brown, reticulately fissured into small, scaly, persistent plates with upraised edges.

TWIGS: Slender, glabrous, reddish or grayish-brown, often covered with a film-like coating that easily rubs off.

LEAVES: Alternate, simple, oblong-lanceolate or lance-obovate, 2-5 inches long, 1-1 1/2 inches wide, apex acuminate, cuneate or rounded at the base, margin glandular-serrate with incurved teeth, glabrous, dark green above, paler below.

FLOWERS: Appear when the leaves are nearly grown, perfect, 1/4-1/3 inch broad, borne on short pedicels in many-flowered racemes, which are 3-6 inches long.

FRUIT: A globose, dark red or black lustrous drupe, 1/4-1/3 inch in diameter, born in drooping racemose clusters; stone ridged on one side.

WINTER BUDS: Ovate, acute, somewhat lustrous, chestnut-brown, flattened, 1/8-1/6 inch long.

WOOD: Rather hard, light, strong, close-grained, light brown or red, with thin yellow sapwood.

USES: Pulp, lumber, furniture. Historical uses: cabinet making, interior finish.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS: Rough scaly bark on old trunks; fruit a purplish-black juicy drupe; petioles slender; one or more red glands at very base of leaf; bruised twigs have the odor and taste of bitter almonds.

DISTRIBUTION IN ALABAMA: Reported as native of the following counties: Colbert, Walker, Tuscaloosa, Clay, Coosa, Chilton, Montgomery, Hale, and Geneva.

EXPLANATION OF PLATE

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| 1. A flowering branch | 5. Cross section of a fruit |
| 2. Vertical section of a flower | 6. A stone |
| 3. A fruiting branch | 7. Portion of leafy branch showing stipules |
| 4. Vertical section of a fruit | 8. A winter branchlet |



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