Western Sandcherry

Prunus besseyi



Western Sandcherry in bloom
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 5 feet

Spread: 5 feet

Sunlight: ○

Hardiness Zone: 2

Other Names: Sandcherry

Description:

A medium-sized ornamental shrub featuring showy white flowers in spring followed by tart black cherries in summer, good for jams; low growing and wide spreading with good fall color; very hardy and adaptable, excellent for dry locations

Ornamental Features

Western Sandcherry is draped in stunning fragrant white flowers along the branches in mid spring before the leaves. It has grayish green deciduous foliage. The pointy leaves turn an outstanding orange in the fall. The fruits are showy deep purple drupes with black overtones, which are displayed in mid summer.

This plant is primarily grown as an ornamental, but it's also valued for its edible qualities. The small round tart fruit is most often used in the following ways:

- Preserves



Western Sandcherry flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Landscape Attributes

Western Sandcherry is a multi-stemmed deciduous shrub with a more or less rounded form. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other landscape plants with less refined foliage.

This is a relatively low maintenance shrub, and is best pruned in late winter once the threat of extreme cold has passed. It is a good choice for attracting birds to your yard. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Western Sandcherry is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- General Garden Use
- Naturalizing And Woodland Gardens
- Orchard/Edible Landscaping



Western Sandcherry in fall
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Planting & Growing

Western Sandcherry will grow to be about 5 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 5 feet. It tends to fill out right to the ground and therefore doesn't necessarily require facer plants in front, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 20 years. This is a self-pollinating variety, so it doesn't require a second plant nearby to set fruit.

This shrub should only be grown in full sunlight. It is very adaptable to both dry and moist growing conditions, but will not tolerate any standing water. It is considered to be drought-tolerant, and thus makes an ideal choice for xeriscaping or the moisture-conserving landscape. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. This species is native to parts of North America.