

Prunus avium

COMMON NAMES

sweet cherry

FAMILY

Rosaceae

AUTHORITY

Prunus avium (L.) L.

FLORA CATEGORY

Vascular – Exotic

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Trees & Shrubs - Dicotyledons

NVS CODE

PRUAVI

CONSERVATION STATUS

Not applicable

HABITAT

Terrestrial. Forest margins, roadsides, scrub, hedgerows

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Deciduous suckering spreading tree, 5~12m high when mature, not armed; trunk tall. Leaf petiole 12~60mm long, glabrous; blade reasonably thin, usu. obovate to broadly elliptic, sometimes narrowly obovate or orbicular, 40~130 x 30~60mm, acute to short-acuminate at apex, obtuse at base, glabrous or glabrate above, tomentose below when young, soon glabrous, 1~2-serrate with teeth obtuse or subacute; stipules acuminate, deciduous. Flowers in umbel-like clusters of 2~4, on very short shoots, unfragrant, pendent; pedicels 25~50mm long, green and glabrous. Hypanthium urceolate; sepals triangular, 3~5mm long, blunt, glabrous, usu. tinged purplish, soon becoming strongly reflexed. Petals usu. 5 but sometimes many in double flowers, 11~19 x 8~17mm, broadly elliptic-oblong or elliptic-obovate, shallowly emarginate, white. Stamens approx. = petals; filaments whitish. Fruit 8~17mm diam., globose or nearly so, glabrous, dark red, occasionally remaining pinkish-red, usu. sweet, sometimes bitter; stone smooth. (- Webb et. al., 1988)

SIMILAR TAXA

A deciduous, suckering, spreading tree 5-12m when mature; flowers in clusters of 2-4 on short shoots; white petals; dark red fruit 8-17mm diameter (Webb et al., 1988).

FLOWERING

September, October, November

FLOWER COLOURS

White

FRUITING

November to February

LIFE CYCLE

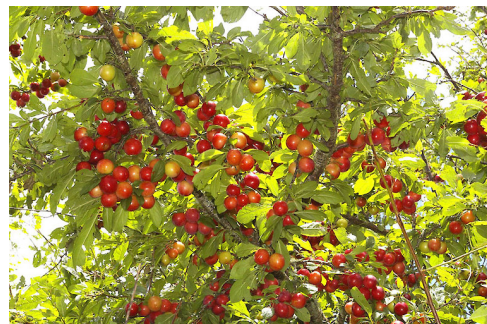
Perennial. Although it can form fairly dense stands, these result from seedlings rather than from suckers. Seeds dispersed by birds (Atkinson 1997).

YEAR NATURALISED

1872

ORIGIN

Europe



Prunus avium. Photographer: John Smith-Dodsworth, Licence: CC BY-NC.

REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Agricultural

ENVIRONMENTAL WEED (2024)

This plant is named in a list of 386 environmental weeds in New Zealand 2024 prepared by DOC. 759 candidate species were considered for inclusion on this new comprehensive list of environmental weeds in New Zealand. The species considered were drawn from published lists of weed species, lists of plants that must be reported or managed by law if observed, existing national and regional programmes and agreements for pest management, and species already managed by the Department of Conservation (DOC). Candidate species were then assessed to see if they were fully naturalised and whether they have more than minor impacts in natural ecosystems. Read the full report [here](#).

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/prunus-avium/>

PDF DATE

17 September 2024