

# Prunus virginiana

Choke Cherry

Native to Maine

Upland  
Forests and Fields

## Leaves



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PERMITTED USE

Look for oval leaves with a finely-toothed edge that are 2 to 10 cm long. Leaves are alternate on the stem.

LEAF ARRANGEMENT	LEAF TYPE	LEAF/LEAFLET SHAPE	LEAF/LEAFLET EDGE
 ALTERNATE	 SIMPLE	 PALMATE	 SMOOTH
 OPPOSITE	 COMPOUND-PALMATE	 OVAL	 TOOTHED
 WHORLED	 COMPOUND-PINNATE	 ROUND	 WAVY

## Plant



SriMesh

CC BY SA

Look for a shrub or small tree that grows up to 6 m tall. Choke Cherry often forms dense thickets (stems grow close together).

## Stem



Ohio State University, Bugwood.org

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Look for smooth brown-gray bark with lenticels (pores). The stem has a strong, unpleasant odor when it is broken.

## Seasonal Change



National Park Service

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Look for clusters of white flowers in late spring. In late summer look for long clusters of shiny, dark-red or black fruit. The fruit is tart and contains small pits.

## Similar Species

Choke Cherry is closely related to the Black Cherry but is much smaller. Black Cherry can reach 30 m tall. The leaves of Choke Cherry are smaller and finely-toothed whereas Black Cherry leaves are smooth.

## Fun Fact

Choke Cherry is toxic to horses. The bark of Choke Cherry root was once used by native Americans to treat colds, fevers, and stomach ailments.