

Hardiness

Zones 3b to 6b

Propagation

Propagation of sand cherry can be done either by seed or cuttings. It is intended for nurseries to produce this plant from seed, but hardwood cuttings are a viable alternative. Harvest fruit when fully mature in late July, by handstripping; cleaning the seed of all the pulp is desirable. 'Catskill' seed needs to have a stratification period of 120 days. Stratified seed can be early spring sown in the nursery bed. Hardwood cuttings have been successfully rooted using a rooting hormone with thiram.

Availability

Nursery owners may obtain propagated material from the Big Flats Plant Materials Center, Corning, New York, to start their seed block for commercial production. For the names of commercial nurseries that sell 'Catskill' sand cherry or for more information on its use, contact your local NRCS or Soil and Water Conservation District office.

For More Information

Visit our Plant Materials Internet site at <http://Plant-Materials.nrcs.usda.gov> to find more information on solving conservation problems using plants.

USDA NRCS
Big Flats Plant Materials Center
RD #1, Box 360A, Rt. 352
Corning, NY 14830
phone: (607) 562-8404
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'Catskill' dwarf sand cherry



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An improved
conservation
plant developed by
the Big Flats Plant
Materials Center,
Corning, NY



'Catskill' Sand Cherry

'Catskill' dwarf sand cherry (*Prunus pumila* var. *depressa*), is a native shrub with a prostrate growth habit. It is intended for use in shoreline and streambank stabilization, where low growing vegetation is preferred, and for riparian buffer plantings. The accession was selected from a stand of sand cherry growing along the Delaware River. Its growth habit makes this species adapted to areas with ice flow problems. It may also have urban conservation uses and potential as an ornamental plant for beautification and landscaping.

'Catskill' was released by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and Pennsylvania Game Commission.



Description

'Catskill' sand cherry (PI-591700) is a native woody plant which attains a height of 12 - 18 inches, with a spread of approximately 8 - 10 feet. As the branches spread, they have the tendency to root or "layer." It is non-invasive and grows about 5 inches per year. It grows on gravelly or sandy beaches along streams. The simple leaves are long and narrow and medium green in color. It has new shoots which are reddish in color and shiny, often having adventitious roots forming along their length as they contact the ground. It has a massive primary root system. This massive root system allows sand cherry to tolerate drought conditions.

Adaptation

'Catskill' sand cherry is found from Ontario to the New York-Pennsylvania border. It is adapted to sandy and gravelly soils along streams, but has performed well on silt loam. It may also perform well on sites with calcareous soils. This plant will tolerate periodic flooding of short duration.

Area of Adaptation for 'Catskill'



Establishment

Planting 1 - 0 nursery bare root stock is preferred. Older plants tend to get too large for easy handling and planting. Planting should be in the spring, prior to June 1, or in the fall after October 10. The stock should be dormant at the time of planting. This plant has a strong root system which should be properly placed in the planting hole. Avoid J-rooting by digging holes of sufficient size. Do not add peat moss, fertilizer or manure. The recommended planting density is one plant per 20 square feet. The plants should be planted in blocks rather than scattered among other vegetation. Do not plant where reed canary grass or reedgrass is present since the competition will be too great. If used in ornamental settings, containerized plants can be planted in the spring to early summer.

Maintenance

Straw or other biodegradable mulch is recommended around each seedling for weed control. Plastic mulch or weed control fabric is recommended in ornamental landscaping sites. Herbicides or mowing are not recommended because there is no way to spray or mow under the canopy. There are no major pest or disease problems observed. Once established, dwarf sand cherry requires no management.

Ornamental Features

This native plant is attractive in an ornamental landscape. The leaves are deciduous, pale green above and whitish below. This plant is very attractive in the spring with small white flowers and purple fruit (1/2 to 5/8 inch diameter) in the summer.

