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*Prunus cerasoides*

[Synonyms : *Cerasus cerasoides*, *Cerasus puddum*, *Prunus campanulata*, *Prunus puddum*]

**WILD HIMALAYAN CHERRY** is a semi-drooping, deciduous tree. Native to the Himalayas, northern India, south-western China and upper Burma (a Country known today as Myanmar), it has small pink flowers.

It is also known as *Anhđáo* (Vietnamese), Bell-flowered cherry, *Chaweewan* (Thai), *Gao pen ying tao* (Chinese), *Khai pa* (Lao), *Padam* (Hindi), *Paddam* (Hindi), *Padmaka* (Marathi and Sanskrit), Taiwan cherry, and *Yun nan ou li* (Chinese).

*Cerasoides* is made up of *cerasus* (Latin for cherry or cherry-tree) and Greek *-oides* (like) components meaning ‘cherry-like’.

In the Indian Himalayan region the small wrinkled, red or yellowish-brown fruit are eaten raw as a famine food.

Fruit stones have been strung into necklaces or rosaries.

Gum from the branches (known as ‘Cherry gum’) has been used to adulterate (or eke out), tragacanth (*Astragalus gummifer*). The strong branches have also provided material for making walking sticks.

This aromatic durable wood has occasionally been used locally for rafters and more widely it has also been used for making tool handles and ornamental furniture. Records indicate that exported to the United Kingdom it has been used there for turning and for making toys.

Thailand included wild Himalayan cherry on the 2 baht postage stamp in a series of New Year flowers issued in 1997 – and again on one of a similar series of four stamps issued for the following New Year on 15<sup>th</sup> November 1999.