

*Prunus padus*

[Synonyms : *Cerasus padus*, *Padus avium*, *Padus racemosa*, *Prunus racemosa*, *Prunus salzeri*]

**BIRD CHERRY** is a deciduous shrub or tree. Native from Europe to Japan it has small heavily almond-smelling, white flowers and leaves that turn rich red in Autumn.

It is also known as *Ahlkirsche* (German), *Azereiro-dos-danados* (Portuguese), Black dogwood, Black merry, *Ceiriosen yr Aderyn* (Welsh), *Cerisier à grappes* (French), *Cerezo aliso* (Spanish), *Ciliegio a grappoli* (Italian), *Ciliegiola grappoli* (Italian), *Ciliegio pado* (Italian), Cluster cherry, Common bird cherry, *Czeremcha pospolita* (Polish), European bird cherry, *Ezo no uwamizu zakura* (Japanese), *Falscher Faulbaum* (German), *Gemeine Traubenkirsche* (German), *Gewöhnliche Traubenkirsche* (German), Hackberry, Hackers, *Haeg. Majtræ* (Danish), Hagberry, *Hägg* (Swedish), Hawkberry, Heckberry, Hegberry, Hogberries, Jackwood, *Jamroi* (Hindi), Mazar tree, Mazzard, *Merisier à grappes* (French), *Pado* (Italian, Portuguese), *Paduso* (Esperanto), *Stinkbeere* (German), *Střemcha obecná* (Czech), *Traubenkirsche* (German), *Traubenkirschenbaum* (German), *Tuomi* (Finnish), *Visciolo a grappoli* (Italian), and *Vogelkers* (Dutch).

Warning – bird cherry is poisonous. It can cause restlessness, staggering gait, convulsions, breathing difficulties and death.

*Padus* is Greek (wild cherry).

Some authorities have noted that in parts of northern Europe the small glossy black berries are used to make alcoholic drinks despite bird cherry's poisonous nature.

The durable and lightweight, disease resistant, reddish brown wood has been used for making gunstocks, toys, furniture and carriages. It has also been burnt locally for fuel. (But in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century it had been avoided for any purpose by some people in north-eastern Scotland who believed it was evil.)