**Prunus maackii**  
Amur Chokecherry

Edward F. Gilman and Dennis G. Watson

**INTRODUCTION**

Amur Chokecherry is pyramidal when young but ultimately forms a 30 to 40-foot-tall tree with a dense, rounded canopy which provides light shade below (Fig. 1). The deciduous leaves are three inches long and are joined in early to mid-May by an explosion of white, fragrant flowers in two to three-inch-long racemes. The multitude of tiny black fruits which follow ripen in August and are quite attractive to birds. The bark is occasionally handsome cinnamon brown peeling off in shaggy masses on the trunk, but more often is an attractive brown with minimum exfoliation. This tree has one of the most attractive bark features of any tree in North America.

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

Scientific name: *Prunus maackii*  
Pronunciation: PROO-nus MACK-ee-eye  
Common name(s): Amur Chokecherry, Manchurian Cherry  
Family: Rosaceae  
USDA hardiness zones: 2B through 6 (Fig. 2)  
Origin: not native to North America  
Uses: Bonsai; container or above-ground planter; recommended for buffer strips around parking lots or for median strip plantings in the highway; near a deck or patio; specimen; residential street tree; no proven urban tolerance  
Availability: somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the tree

**DESCRIPTION**

Height: 30 to 40 feet  
Spread: 25 to 35 feet  
Crown uniformity: symmetrical canopy with a regular (or smooth) outline, and individuals have more or less identical crown forms  
Crown shape: round  
Crown density: moderate  
Growth rate: medium  
Texture: medium

**Foliage**

Leaf arrangement: alternate (Fig. 3)  
Leaf type: simple  
Leaf margin: serrate  
Leaf shape: elliptic (oval); ovate  
Leaf venation: banchidodrome; pinnate

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Leaf type and persistence: deciduous
Leaf blade length: 2 to 4 inches
Leaf color: green
Fall color: yellow
Fall characteristic: showy

Trunk and Branches
Trunk/bark/branches: routinely grown with, or trainable to be grown with, multiple trunks; grow mostly upright and will not droop; tree wants to grow with several trunks but can be trained to grow with a single trunk; very showy trunk; no thorns
Pruning requirement: needs little pruning to develop a strong structure
Breakage: resistant
Current year twig color: brown; reddish
Current year twig thickness: thin

Flower
Flower color: white
Flower characteristics: pleasant fragrance; showy; spring flowering

Fruit
Fruit shape: round
Fruit length: < .5 inch
Fruit covering: fleshy
Fruit color: black
Fruit characteristics: attracts birds; inconspicuous and not showy; fruit, twigs, or foliage cause significant litter

Culture
Light requirement: tree grows in part shade/part sun; tree grows in full sun
Soil tolerances: clay; loam; sand; slightly alkaline; acidic; well-drained
Drought tolerance: high
Aerosol salt tolerance: moderate
Winter interest: tree has winter interest due to unusual form, nice persistent fruits, showy winter trunk, or winter flowers
Outstanding tree: tree has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more
Invasive potential: little, if any, potential at this time
Ozone sensitivity: sensitive or moderately tolerant
Verticillium wilt susceptibility: susceptible
Pest resistance: long-term health usually not affected by pests

USE AND MANAGEMENT

Prune to open up the canopy to develop more of a tree-form, otherwise it looks like a large shrub. Remove interior branches and space main branches along the trunk. A more upright shape can be created by removing lateral branches, a more spreading shape can be promoted by removing upright branches.

Use the tree along an entrance road to a commercial development planted on 20 to 25-foot centers or along side the patio or deck in the back yard.

Amur Chokecherry should be grown in full sun on well-drained soil, and performs well only in the north. The trees should be located where the roots can remain moist, but not wet, as drought tolerance is not characteristic.

Propagation is by softwood cuttings from June to July, or by seed.

Pests

Some of its pests are borers in warm climates, aphids, scale.

Diseases

This tree is susceptible to infection by leaf spot.

Other

Roots: surface roots are usually not a problem