

# Tree of the Month:

## Japanese Weeping Cherry and Snow Fountain Weeping Cherry

*Prunus subhirtella 'Pendula'*  
*Prunus x 'Snofozam'*



Weeping Cherries are clearly one of the most popular Trees for homeowners today and for many good reasons. Weeping Cherry are outstanding while in flower and just as outstanding the rest of the year because of the graceful arching of the branches. Weeping Cherry are relatively easy to grow and maintain in your yard and behave very well. Pink Weeping Cherries can reach 20-40' high and wide if allowed, while the Snow Fountain selection reaches only 6-12' high and wide.

Weeping Cherries are mostly 'grafted' onto hardier Cherry rootstock at about 5 or 6'. This improves root hardiness and support for the large heavy weeping branches. Weeping Cherries are hardy to about zone 5. At times, Weeping Cherries will have branches that sprout below the graft union, these are easily identified by their fast growing straight, upright habit and should be removed as soon as recognized. Most will throw out these 'suckers' once or twice a year and these can be removed at any time, the earlier the better to avoid large pruning scars. Too often, many homeowners overlook this simple maintenance step and end up with a very strangely formed Weeping Cherry where the suckers dominate and eventually the tree loses all weeping form. The suckers will outgrow the desired branches 10 to 1!

*“You can trust the Pennsylvania Pride Weeping Cherries to perform in your home landscape year after year.”*

Pruning the top of the Cherries is also simple, you can choose to allow them to weep to the ground or prune as to allow mowing or walking underneath on larger growers. I prefer a little of both, I enjoy the weeping form and texture in flower and in leaf. You can be very aggressive in pruning your Weeping Cherries either in thinning of the number of branches you prefer or in pruning back to maintain a tight and smaller spread. Either way, pruning is best done right after flowering. I encourage you to prune at will, Cherries love it and they respond quickly!

Cherries do best in full sun and in well drained good soil. However, Cherries are very tolerant of compacted and dry soils and are considered easy to grow. Cherries are usually a little higher priced because of the great care taken in the grafting process on the nursery. Caution is required when selecting your Cherry, look for strong well-healed graft unions and where you see thin and weak stems below the graft this is usually a sign of a weak graft and future failure. You can trust the Pennsylvania Pride Weeping Cherries to perform in your home landscape year after year.

Weeping Cherry make great specimen and focal point Trees in any landscape. Snow Fountains look great when planted in rock garden settings as the main featured plant. In my last home I planted a group of Weeping Cherries (seven of them), well spaced but together and when they came into flower it was a fantastic show! Even better, together they created a beautiful garden spot, shady and cool where we enjoyed many hours of relaxation and family time.

- Don Eaton  
- Pennsylvania Pride Grow Team

