Russian Almond
Russian Almond  
(*Prunus tenella*)

**General Description**
A low, suckering shrub native to western Asia and eastern Siberia. Hardy, but not highly desirable for landscape purposes because its suckering habit makes it difficult to control. However, the dense thickets formed are excellent for wildlife food and cover. Abundant pink to rosy flowers in early spring.

**Leaves and Buds**
- Bud Arrangement - Alternate.
- Bud Color - Brown.
- Bud Size - 1/8 inch.
- Leaf Type and Shape - Simple, obovate-oblong.
- Leaf Margins - Sharply serrate.
- Leaf Surface - Leathery, glabrous, prominently veined beneath.
- Leaf Length - 1 to 3 inches.
- Leaf Width - 1/2 to 1 inch.
- Leaf Color - Green above, pale beneath; orange fall color.

**Flowers and Fruits**
- Flower Type - Small, 1 to 3 per cluster.
- Flower Color - Pink to rose.
- Fruit Type - An ovoid nut with a very hard hairy shell, 3/4 inch across.
- Fruit Color - Tan.

**Form**
- Growth Habit - Upright, suckering.
- Texture - Medium-fine, summer; fine, winter.
- Crown Height - 3 to 5 feet.
- Crown Width - 3 to 5 feet.
- Bark Color - Brown.
- Root System - Medium in depth and spread.

**Environmental Requirements**

**Soils**
- Soil Texture - Prefers loamy soils. Performs satisfactorily in heavy clay.
- Soil pH - 5.0 to 8.0.
- Windbreak Suitability Group - 1, 1K, 3, 4, 4C, 5.

**Cold Hardiness**
- USDA Zone 2.

**Water**
- Fair drought resistance.

**Light**
- Full sun only.

**Uses**

**Conservation/Windbreaks**
Small shrub for farmstead windbreak, riparian plantings, and highway beautification.

**Wildlife**
- Very good browse. Provides good escape and loafing cover for game birds and rabbits.

**Agroforestry Products**
- Medicinal - Some *Prunus* species have been used for cancer research and as an astringent for coughs, colds, and gout.

**Urban/Recreational**
- Spreading ground cover, best if planted in masses.

**Cultivated Varieties**
- Regal Russian Almond (*P. tenella ‘Regal’). Released by USDA-NRCS, Plant Materials Center, Bismarck, North Dakota.
- White Russian Almond (*P. tenella ‘Alba’) - White flowers.

**Related Species**
Several native and adapted plums, cherries, almonds (*Prunus* species)

**Pests**
No major pest problems. Extracts of various *Prunus* species are toxic to insect pests.