Mongolian Cherry
Mongolian Cherry
(*Prunus fruticosa*)

**General Description**
A medium-sized suckering shrub with attractive glossy foliage and cherry-like fruit. Edible fruits which are tart and dark red. Excellent for pie and jelly.

**Leaves and Buds**
- **Bud Arrangement** - Alternate.
- **Bud Color** - Brown.
- **Bud Size** - 1/8 inch.
- **Leaf Type and Shape** - Simple, ovate-elliptical.
- **Leaf Margins** - Crenate-serrulate.
- **Leaf Surface** - Glossy, smooth.
- **Leaf Length** - 3/4 to 2 inches.
- **Leaf Width** - 3/8 to 1 inch.
- **Leaf Color** - Dark glossy-green; yellow fall color.

**Flowers and Fruits**
- **Flower Type** - 2 or 4 flowers in sessile umbels, with leafy bracts.
- **Flower Color** - White.
- **Fruit Type** - Cherry-shaped fruit, globose.
- **Fruit Color** - Dark red.

**Form**
- **Growth Habit** - Upright to rounded, dense.
- **Texture** - Medium-fine, summer; fine, winter.
- **Crown Height** - 3 to 6 feet.
- **Crown Width** - 3 to 6 feet.
- **Bark Color** - Brown.
- **Root System** - Medium in depth and spread.

**Environmental Requirements**

**Soils**
- **Soil Texture** - Prefers loamy soils.
- **Soil pH** - 5.0 to 7.5.
- **Windbreak Suitability Group** - 1, 3, 4, 4C, 5.

**Cold Hardiness**
- **USDA Zone** 2.

**Water**
- **Medium, not drought tolerant.**

**Light**
- **Full sun only.**

**Uses**

**Conservation/Windbreaks**
Small to medium shrub for farmstead windbreaks, riparian plantings and highway beautification.

**Wildlife**
Fruits are relished by many songbirds. Nesting cover for a few species of songbirds. Browsed by rabbits, mice, and deer, which could cause serious injury if control measures are not taken.

**Agroforestry Products**
- **Food** - Processed as jellies, jams and pies.
- **Medicinal** - Some *Prunus* species have been used as an astringent for coughs, colds, gout, and in cancer research.

**Urban/Recreational**
Used for screen, hedge, border and group plantings.

**Cultivated Varieties**
Scarlet Mongolian Cherry (*Prunus fruticosa* ‘Scarlet’) – released by USDA-NRCS, Plant Materials Center, Bismarck, North Dakota, as a cultivar seed strain.

**Related Species**
- **American Plum** (*Prunus americana*)
- **Chokecherry** (*P. virginiana*)
- **Nanking Cherry** (*P. tomentosa*)
- **Western Sandcherry** (*P. besseyi*)

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