

Prunus mahaleb

(Mahaleb)

“The Mahaleb is a small cherry tree that grows wild in Mediterranean countries and West Asia. The tree’s

deep-reaching roots that are adapted to drought give the species a commercial agricultural value. The tree is used as rootstock onto which commercially grown cherry, plum, and apricot trees are grafted. The tree is seasonal. Its leaves turn an attractive yellow in autumn before they drop in winter, unveiling the tree’s smooth, grayish bark, and many spreading branches. In spring, leaves and flowers start growing at the same time. The leaves are oval, shiny, and finely toothed around the edges, while the flowers are small, white, and pleasantly fragrant. The Mahaleb produces small cherry-like fruits that turn dark purple as they mature. The fruit is bitter, and it is liked and eaten by birds but not by humans. When ground into a powder to produce the mahalebspice, Mahaleb seeds have an important commercial value. The spice has a nutty, bitter-sweet, taste, and it is a crucial ingredient of Middle Eastern Arabic sweets. There are very few Mahaleb trees left in Lebanon, with the few remaining specimens found in Ehden Reserve. By contrast, Syria has many Mahaleb trees, and is a major producer of mahaleb spice.”*

*Trees of Lebanon, 2014, Salma Nashabe Talhouk, Mariana M. Yazbek, Khaled Sleem, Arbi J. Sarkissian, Mohammad S. Al-Zein, and Sakra Abo Eid



Plant Image

Landscape Information

French Name: Bois de sainte Lucie

Arabic Name: محلب

Plant Type: Tree

Origin: Mediterranean , West Asia

Heat Zones: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9

Hardiness Zones: 6, 7, 8

Uses: Specimen, Edible, Wildlife, Native to Lebanon

Size/Shape

Growth Rate: Moderate

Tree Shape: Round

Canopy Symmetry: Irregular

Canopy Density: Medium

Canopy Texture: Medium

Height at Maturity: 5 to 8 m

Spread at Maturity: 5 to 8 meters

Time to Ultimate Height: 10 to 20 Years

Prunus mahaleb

(Mahaleb)



Flower Image

Botanical Description

Foliage

Leaf Arrangement: Alternate

Leaf Venation: Pinnate

Leaf Persistence: Deciduous

Leaf Type: Simple

Leaf Blade: 5 - 10 cm

Leaf Shape: Ovate

Leaf Margins: Serrulate, Serrate

Leaf Textures: Medium

Leaf Scent: No Fragrance

Color(growing season): Green

Color(changing season): Yellow

Flower

Flower Showiness: True

Flower Size Range: 1.5 - 3

Flower Type: Solitary

Flower Sexuality: Monoecious (Bisexual)

Flower Scent: No Fragrance

Flower Color: White

Seasons: Spring

Trunk

Trunk Susceptibility to Breakage: Generally resists breakage

Number of Trunks: Multi-Trunked

Trunk Esthetic Values: Not Showy

Fruit

Fruit Type: Drupe

Fruit Showiness: True

Fruit Size Range: 1.5 - 3

Fruit Colors: Purple

Seasons: Spring

Prunus mahaleb

(Mahaleb)



Leaf Image

Horticulture Management

Tolerance

Frost Tolerant: Yes

Heat Tolerant: No

Drought Tolerant: Yes

Salt Tolerance: Poor

Requirements

Soil Requirements: Clay, Sand

Soil Ph Requirements: Neutral, Alkaline

Water Requirements: Moderate

Light Requirements: Full

Management

Toxity: No

Invasive Potential: No

Susceptibility to Pests and Diseases: No

Pruning Requirement: Little needed, to develop a strong structure

Fruit/ Leaves/ Flowers litter: No

Surface Rooting: No

Life Span: 25-50 years

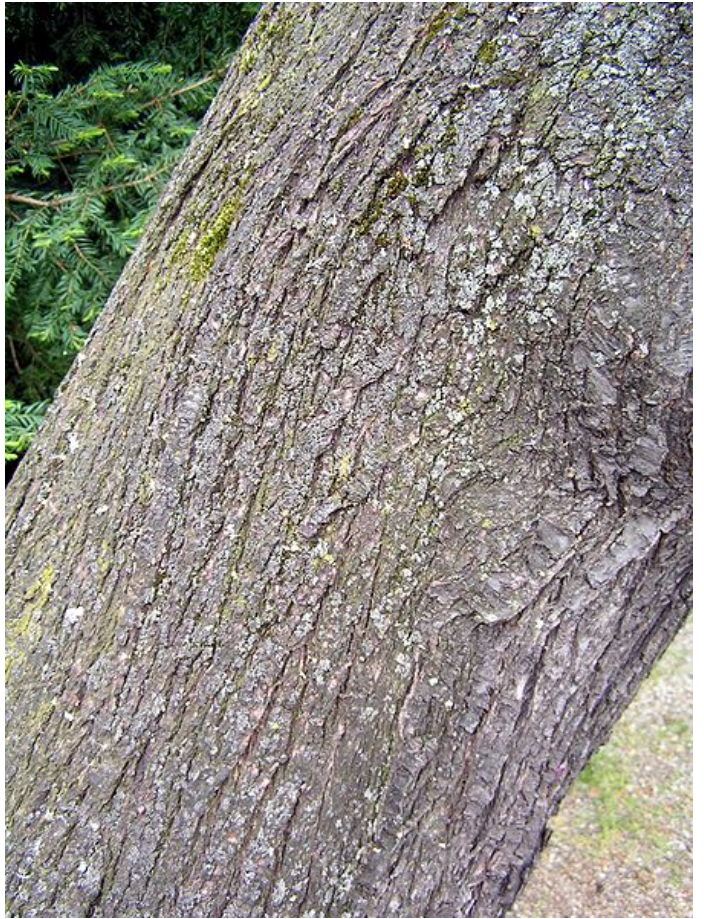
Edible Parts: Fruit

Plant Propagations: Seed, Grafting

MORE IMAGES



Fruit Image



Bark Image



Other Image