

Consider your needs when choosing a flowering tree

Question: We would like to add a blooming tree to our front yard. Can you recommend trees that will provide pretty blossoms in the spring and fit in a smaller yard?

Answer: In spring the gardens of the Pacific Northwest explode with color from bulbs, flowering shrubs and blooming trees – a wonderful sight after the long, grey dormant days of winter. An added value of a blooming tree is its extra big, showy pop of color. In addition, a blooming tree makes a nice specimen or striking focal point in the garden. When selecting a tree, a few things to consider include

- Blossom color – does it produce other seasonal interest such as fall colors, berries or interesting bark

- Growth habits and size at maturity

- What conditions it needs (sun/shade, soil type)

- How it fits within your garden design

Below is a selection of terrific spring blooming trees that fit nicely in smaller spaces, grow well in our area, and also provide a lovely fragrance.

EASTERN REDBUD (CERCIS CANADENSIS)

This early spring bloomer produces

eye-catching clusters of pea-shaped rosy pink, purple or white blooms, which appear in great profusion on the bare twigs, branches and even on the trunk before the leaves appear. Redbuds can be either a shrub or tree, but the Eastern Redbud will take a tree form, is a faster growing variety and makes an interesting specimen tree. Plant in full sun, in well-drained soil; once established this tree requires little watering.

FLOWERING CHERRY (PRUNUS)

There are many varieties; all produce clusters of pink or white flowers and may be single, semi-double or fully double blossoms. They usually bloom before it leafs out, but some flower with new leaves. Many also produce nice fall color, all are good trees to garden under. Large ones make nice shade trees, and smaller ones are valued in Japanese gardens. They prefer full sun and require fast draining, well-aerated soil.

FLOWERING CRABAPPLE (MALUS CULTIVAR)

These are not the crabapple trees grown for fruit, although some flowering crabapples will produce edible fruit. The flowering crabapple is valued for its showy



TOM RAU/PIXABAY

Flowering pear trees produce small, inedible fruit and beautiful spring blossoms.

masses of white, pink or red flowers. They make nice lawn trees and can be under-planted with primroses, bulbs and other shade loving bedding plants. They do well in full sun or partial shade and prefer moderately fertile and well-drained soil.

FLOWERING PEAR (PYRUS CALLERYANA)

This early bloomer is valued for its profuse late winter or early spring show of white flowers, which appear before the leaves. It will produce tiny, round, inedible green fruit. In the fall, the glossy, dark green leaves turn a rich purplish red. This tree grows well in full sun and is unfussy about its

soil. It will even grow well in clay.

STAR MAGNOLIA (MAGNOLIA STELLATA)

This is not the large evergreen magnolia many are familiar with, but instead a smaller deciduous, early blooming tree that produces fragrant, striking star-like flowers before the leaves appear. Most varieties produce white flowers, but some produce pink. Magnolias take full sun to partial shade and fairly rich, well drained, neutral to slightly acidic soil.

THORNLESS COCKSPUR HAWTHORN (CRATAEGUS CRUSGALLI INERMIS)

Hawthorns are members of the rose family, thus they have sharp

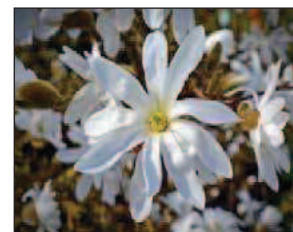


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Flowering shrubs and blooming trees are a welcome sight after the long, gray days of winter.

thorns, however the “Inermis” variety is thornless. They produce clusters of small white flowers after leaves appear in the spring, which are then followed by tiny fruit resembling little apples. In the fall the leaves turn an orange to red color. Plant them in full sun and well-drained soil. Hawthorn trees can become invasive in our area, spreading into the countryside

through birds dropping fruit.

These six trees are just a sampling of favorites grown in our area; there are many others that bloom in spring and provide seasonal interest. Visit your local nursery to explore the many varieties and determine which one is just right for your garden.

Do you have a gardening question? Please e-mail, call, or visit the Douglas County Master Gardeners Plant Clinic at douglasmg@oregonstate.edu, 541-236-3052, or 1134 S.E. Douglas Ave., Roseburg. Douglas County Master Gardeners are trained volunteers who help the OSU Extension Service serve the people of Douglas County.