Welcome

The Cherry Blossom Festival on the National Mall is a very special time. Once a year the National Mall is decorated with different shades of pink and white as thousands of cherry blossoms come to full bloom. Not only are these trees beautiful but they are symbolic of our friendship with the nation of Japan. There are more to these trees than meets the eye, including a great story about how they got here. This story spans over one hundred years!

How to become a Junior Ranger:

You can be a part of the cherry blossom story by becoming a Jr. Ranger. Just complete the activities in this book and return it to a ranger for a special Cherry Blossom Jr. Ranger badge.

HELP

protect the trees!

Did you..?

☐ Leave the blossoms for all to enjoy.

☐ Stay on the sidewalks to protect the roots.

☐ Refrain from swinging on the tree limbs.

☐ Leave the fragile branches alone.

☐ Teach others how to protect the trees.
Let’s Get Started!

The story of how cherry trees found their way onto the National Mall goes back over one hundred years. Here are some of the events that have occurred to bring us to the Cherry Blossom Festival we know today.

1854
Commodore Matthew Perry negotiates a treaty with Japan.

1885
Eliza Scidmore begins campaign to get cherry trees in Washington, D.C.

1910
2,000 trees arrive from Japan. They are diseased and are burned.

1912
3,000 healthy trees are planted.

1910
First official National Cherry Blossom Festival.

1935
Women protest the removal of cherry trees to build the Thomas Jefferson Memorial.

1938
Japanese lantern presented to D.C. to celebrate 100 years of friendship.

1954
Lady Bird Johnson plants the first of 3,800 new trees.
Cherry Trees in National Mall and Memorial Parks

**Yoshino**
(Prunus x yedoensis)
The most common cherry, comprising 70% of all trees.

**Kwanzan**
(Prunus serrulata ‘Kwanzan’)
Blooms 10 to 14 days after the Yoshinos. Showy, pink flowers.

**Takesimensis**
(Prunus Takesimensis)
Found near Hains Point. More flood tolerant than other varieties.

**Afterglow**
(Prunus x yedoensis ‘Afterglow’)
An early-bloomer bearing clouds of showy pink flowers.

**Autumn Flowering**
(Prunus Subhirtella ‘Autumnalis’)
Blooms throughout the year on Washington Monument grounds.

**Weeping**
(Prunus Subhirtella ‘Pendula’)
Drooping growth pattern.

**Akebono**
(Prunus x yedoensis ‘Akebono’)
A hybrid of the Yoshino, found near the John Ericsson Memorial.

**Sargent**
(Prunus sargentii)

**Usuzumi**
(Prunus spachiana ‘Ascendens’)
Branches reach upward in a ‘V’ with a flat top.

**Fugenzo**
(Prunus serrulata ‘Fugenzo’)
Distinguished by their double pink flowers.

**Shirofugen**
(Prunus serulata ‘Shirofugen’)
One of the last cherries to bloom. Flowers are large and white.

**Okame**
(Prunus x ‘Okame’)
A small, round headed cherry which blooms with bright pink flowers.

Did you know there is more than one type of cherry blossom? How many can you find?
See if you can get a “Bingo” (three in a row) by finding some of these other significant items as you explore the park. Mark an X on the items that you find. Tip: work on the last page of the book at two of these spots!
Japanese symbols are very different from English. Japanese often uses symbols instead of letters to make words and sentences. There are thousands of different symbols used in everyday life. How many do you think you could remember?

**HANAMI**

Hanami = Viewing the trees

Use the following steps to create the Japanese symbol.

Draw the Hanami symbol.
Save the Blossoms

Picking the cherry blossoms off the trees is not allowed in the parks. Help the park ranger navigate the maze to rescue all of the stolen flowers and save them from dying!

Can you find all the words?

Cherry Blossom Tree Ranger Festival Hanami Peduncle Bloom Bud Roots Bark Friendship Japan Springtime Pagoda Lantern Washington

MVDRWFQOMTQNYYXTBLSSOMTKHRTRCWSPRINGTIMEMESEXOIGOAHXPHJTCWCEEFMNOFYENIAATHLMRFPBREVADPXUEDWIPLOHLCUTYRDZEAWSOALHGBNNRLSNGPTRSFQLCYIHDOHUSIUABWOLZAASDMKNGVPNOAHOENHAAAZQGIRMMAIKPELJXALPEZKHMMPABUDYQXKFMRDNIJWASHINGTNPEP
What’s in a Tree?

In the cross section of a tree’s trunk you can see many things. Scientists use these cross sections to determine a tree’s age and things that happened to the tree during its life, including sickness, disease, and drought.

**Xylem**
Most recent growth, transports water and nutrients

**Phloem**
Inner bark, the circulatory system that transports food

**Pith**
Core of the tree

**Outer bark**
Layer that protects

**Heartwood**
Wood surrounding the core

**Disease**
Left a ring showing damage

1. If we say that one tree ring equals one year of life, how many tree rings would you have? Draw rings in the trunk below, for the age that you are.

2. Mark the pith, heartwood and Xylem of your tree with an X. Shade the pith dark, the heartwood light, and leave the xylem uncolored.
Ready, Set, Bloom!

Cherry blossoms don’t just bloom overnight. It takes a long time to go from the first stage to the last and they look different during these different stages. Draw a line from the stage to the picture it matches.

STAGE 1: Florets Visible

STAGE 2: Peduncle Elongation

STAGE 3: Puffy White

STAGE 4: Full Bloom
Write a Haiku!

Haiku poetry developed from other forms of Japanese poetry during the 1600s. It has become a popular poetic form today. The Japanese liked this form of poetry to capture a single event or moment in time. Use these steps to create your own Haiku.

Step 1:
Think of an idea for your poem. It could be about your trip to see the cherry trees or your visit to the National Mall.

Step 2:
Haikus do not rhyme so use your imagination to paint a picture with your words.

Step 3:
Turn your idea into poetry by writing a Haiku which is three (3) short lines. The first line has five (5) syllables, the second line seven (7) syllables, and the third has five (5) syllables.

TRY IT!

Here’s an example:

Every spring it rains
1 2 3 4 5
Trees and flowers Awaken
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Color fills the air
1 2 3 4 5

__________________________

__________________________

__________________________
Gifts From Japan

Are you a good detective? Visit at least one of the two places shown below and answer the questions about these gifts from Japan.

1. According to the plaque near the lantern, the gift of cherry trees was a “gesture of ___________________________ and ___________________________”

2. What special event happens at the lantern to signal the ceremonial start of the cherry blossom festival? (Hint: look for a sign by the sidewalk).

Bonus: First Lady Helen Taft helped plant the first trees in 1912, but a small plaque at the base of a tree near the lantern recognizes what other tree planting first lady?

Mrs. ___________________________

Japanese Lantern
near Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial

Fun Fact: The Japanese lantern is the oldest structure in Washington, D.C. It was built in 17th-century Japan and given to the United States in 1954.

Japanese Pagoda
near Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial

Fun Fact: The Japanese Pagoda was shipped from Japan in separate pieces and it did not come with assembly instructions. Researchers at the Library of Congress were eventually able to figure out the correct order.

1. Label the elements represented on the Japanese Pagoda on the lines to the right. (Hint: look for a sign by the sidewalk).

2. What can you see, hear, smell, and feel around the pagoda that matches the elements it represents?
JUNIOR RANGER PLEDGE:

I promise to teach others how to do the same.
I promise to treat the cherry trees respectfully.
I promise to preserve the cherry blossoms.

Junior Ranger Certificate of Achievement