

JULY: WILD CHERRY *PRUNUS AVIUM*

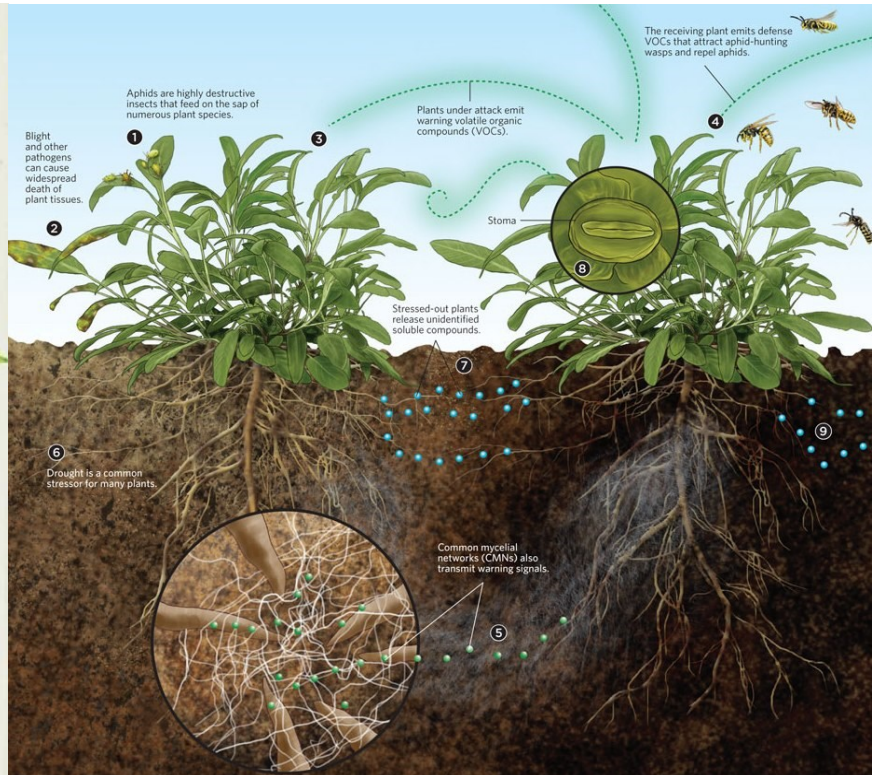
Wild cherry trees grow up to 30m tall and are found in beech woods and hedgerows.

LEAVES
Oval-shaped and pointed, slightly downy underneath.

FRUIT
Usually glossy red, but occasionally black or yellow.

BLOSSOM
Clusters of white flowers appear from late March to May.

BIRD CHERRY
Fruits are black, on much shorter stalks than those of wild cherry.



THE SECRET SOCIAL LIVES OF PLANTS

Contrary to the long-held idea that plants are uncommunicative, recent research has made it clear that many species conduct lively and informative conversations with one another. Scientists have revealed that plants communicate through the air, by releasing odoriferous chemicals called volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and through the soil, by secreting soluble chemicals into the rhizosphere and transporting them along thread-like networks formed by soil fungi. And this is more than mere gossip: these signals warn neighbors of the many dangers facing plants.

In response to herbivore attacks (1) or infection (2), plants release a blend of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) into the air (3). Neighboring plants respond by activating defense responses or altering expression of defense-related genes to prime themselves against impending stress (4).

Warning signals about herbivore damage and fungal pathogens are also transmitted via the filamentous hyphae of soil fungi that colonize and connect the roots of different plants in common mycelial networks (CMNs) (5). How compounds zip along these fungal networks is not clear, but researchers have hypothesized that they could travel along the thin layer of water flowing along the surface of the hyphae or through the cytoplasm of the hyphae themselves.

Plants stressed by drought (6) secrete soluble chemicals from their roots that diffuse through the soil to the roots of neighboring plants (7). Receiver plants respond not only by closing the stomata on their leaves (8), but also by relaying the message to other nearby plants (9).

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I talk to trees and animals. We have interesting conversations about food, weather, and love. They sometimes can predict the future.

Shan Sa

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Mom's Cherry Pie

Preheat oven to 425°

Ingredients:

- 5 cups fresh sour cherries
- 1 ½ cups of sugar
- 3-4 tablespoons cornstarch
- ½ teaspoon almond extract

Combine the above ingredients and let stand 10-15 minutes

Pour mixture into the bottom crust.

Dot mixture with 2-3 tablespoons butter.

Top with pie crust.

Trim and flute crust (pinch crust together around edges).

Cut steam vents in top of pie.

Bake for 30 minutes.

Reduce oven temperature to 350° and cook for 25-35 more minutes until juices bubble through the vents.

Find a good pie crust recipe to use but a good tip for the crust is: Best if crust is made with 1/2 lard and 1/2 butter

