News Release
U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service

U.S. National Arboretum

3501 New York Avenue NE, Washington, DC, 20002
Release Date: March 25, 2026
www.usna.usda.gov

U.S. National Arboretum “Stumpy” Propagules are Alive and Well

Washington — Plant material from “Stumpy,” the hollow but resilient Yoshino cherry tree removed from Washington, D.C.’s Tidal Basin in 2024, has been successfully propagated by the U.S. National Arboretum (USNA). The plant material was collected by the National Park Service in early summer 2024. The new trees are healthy and thriving and have put on substantial growth since forming their own root systems. This spring, the trees reached the pinnacle achievement for the D.C. cherry trees – they flowered for the first time.

“The U.S. National Arboretum was honored to collaborate with the National Park Service,” said USNA Director Dr. Richard Olsen. “We remain deeply connected through our shared commitment of exhibiting and preserving these beautiful icons for public viewing. It is our hope that the story and spirit of these trees will inspire future generations of cherry tree enthusiasts around the world—deepening cultural connections for years to come.”

The USNA has celebrated each milestone the trees have reached along the way, from their first new leaves to surviving their first winter. The “Stumpy” trees will be carefully maintained at the Arboretum until the National Park Service is ready to receive them for planting, as early as next spring.

Currently, the “Stumpy” trees are being cared for in a non-public, research and production area. While they are not on public display, visitors are encouraged to use the USNA’s self-guided cherry tree tour, “Beyond the Tidal Basin,” to visit other Yoshino trees along with the 70+ cherry tree varieties planted throughout the grounds of the Arboretum.

The plant preservation techniques that were used in this project showcase the important genetic conservation efforts of the USNA. The Arboretum is a public garden, but it is also a gene bank that focuses on preserving plants of conservation concern, genetic importance, and in some cases, those that are culturally significant. These propagation techniques are one example of how USNA can maintain a wide range of plant material, enhance the visitor experience and support many scientific and horticultural collaborators.

USNA is a collections-based research facility and public garden of the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Research, Education, and Economics mission area. In 1953, the National Arboretum was incorporated into USDA’s Agricultural Research Service. The Arboretum hosts the world’s first museum dedicated to the art of bonsai, the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum, established in 1976.

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