

*laefolia* growing with it have suffered seriously from this disease. It therefore seems possible that good results in hardiness, freedom from disease and improvement of fruit might possibly be obtained in seedling forms of this Chinese tree or by crossing it with some of our garden varieties. The European and western Asiatic Pear-trees bloom rather later than the Chinese species but their flowers will soon open. The original collection of Pear-trees is on the left-hand side of the Forest Hills Road; a larger and more complete collection has recently been planted in the hollow at the eastern base of Peter's Hill, and there are good specimens of the species introduced by Wilson from western China on the southern slope of Bussey Hill with other Chinese trees and shrubs.

**Asiatic Crabapples.** The flowers of these trees are unusually late this spring, but unless the weather continues exceptionally wet and cold there will be open flowers on at least a few species by the 17th, and many others will be in full bloom by the 22nd or 23rd of the month. The flowers of these trees make one of the principal spectacular displays of the year in the Arboretum, and only that made by the Lilacs attracts a larger number of visitors. Most of the trees are well covered by buds, but there will be no flowers on a few individuals, including the plant of *Malus floribunda* at the foot of the bank on the left hand side of the Forest Hills drive. This is unusual for *Malus floribunda* rarely fails in May to excite admiration by its countless thousands of deep rose-colored flower-buds and white petals. Other trees of this Crabapple in the Arboretum will flower this year as usual, and the tree of *Malus arnoldiana*, a hybrid of *Malus floribunda* and an even more beautiful plant, in the group on the Forest Hills Road which did not flower last year, is now covered with flower-buds. For forty years the Arboretum has been engaged in forming this collection of Crabapples in which are now found all the American and Asiatic species, many distinct varieties of the species and a number of hybrids. It still lacks, however, the wild type of the species of western Europe (*Malus sylvestris*) which it has not been possible to find. This is unfortunate for this Crabapple has played a more or less important part in the development of the cultivated Apple-trees of orchards. The Crabapples in the Arboretum hybridize freely among themselves and it is useless to plant seeds gathered from these trees with the expectation that they will reproduce the plants from which they were gathered. The seedling trees may prove worthless or they may be superior to any of the Crabapples now cultivated. The characters of any species, variety or hybrid can be preserved in its descendants only by means of grafting or budding; and it is for this reason that many of the handsome plants in the Arboretum collection are still rare in other collections. For those fortunate persons to whom the beauty of a plant means more than its identity and correct name Crabapples raised from seeds gathered in collections like that of the Arboretum might be recommended, but such seedlings will require names to make them salable and gardeners' names for plants of doubtful parentage will only add to the perplexities of the students of cultivated plants. Stock plants raised by grafts from correctly named individuals would in the hands of a few competent nurserymen supply in time the country with correctly named Crabapples and save planters much loss of time and many disappointments.



The eastern form of *Malus baccata* (var. *mandshurica*), a native of Manchuria, Korea and northern Japan, is again the first plant in the collection to open its flowers. This as it grows in the Arboretum is a bush-like tree about fifteen feet tall and broad; the flowers are white, an inch in diameter, and more fragrant than those of any other Apple-tree in the collection. The fruit is yellow or red and not much larger than a pea. The delightful fragrance of its flowers is the chief attraction of this variety and makes it well worth a place in gardens. Almost as early to flower is *Malus micromalus*. It was first sent to Europe from Japan in 1856 under the name of "Kaido," a name which in Japan has been given to another plant, and owing perhaps to this confusion of names very little has ever been heard of it in Europe or the United States. In Japan it has been seen only in gardens, and Japanese botanists have considered it a hybrid brought to their country from China. From other Crabapples it differs in its upright growing branches which make the tree conspicuous by its pyramidal habit. The flowers open from deep rose-colored buds and are pale pink and hardly more than half an inch in diameter, and are followed by small yellow fruits. The large specimens in the Peter's Hill Group are not flowering this year, but a small specimen recently planted on the left hand side of the Forest Hills Road is covered with flowers. Another early flowering species, the Parkman Crab (*Malus Halliana* var. *Parkmanii*) is, as usual, blooming well this year. It is a small, vase-shaped tree with dark bark, dark green leaves tinged with purple as they unfold and rose-red semi-double flowers unlike in color those of any other Crabapple. This little tree is considered by some persons the most beautiful of the Crabapples, but although it reached Boston in 1862, in the first consignment of plants which came to the United States direct from Japan it is not often seen in gardens, even in those of Japan to which it was originally brought from China. During the next two or three weeks Crabapples, first the Asiatic and then the American species, will be in bloom in the Arboretum. As their flower-buds enlarge attention will be called to some of the other species in later issues of these Bulletins.

**Unfolding Leaves.** A careful examination of unfolding leaves is recommended to students and lovers of trees. They are often beautiful and always interesting; in some of the large difficult genera like *Quercus* they afford characters by which many of the species can be readily recognized in early spring. On the Japanese *Cercidiphyllum* and on the native tree Shad-bush the young leaves are deep red bronze color; on many trees the young leaves are more or less thickly covered with silvery white hairs and on others entirely destitute of a hairy covering. Among Beech-trees the winter-buds of the European species are still closed when the young leaves of our native Beech are unfolding, and those of one of the Japanese species are nearly fully grown. In the Arboretum there are now Maples with fully grown leaves close to species whose bud-scales are only just beginning to open. These few examples of variation serve to show that there is something of interest to learn about every tree and shrub from its leaf-buds and unfolding leaves during the month of May.



1920. "Asiatic Crabapples." *Bulletin of popular information - Arnold Arboretum, Harvard University* 6(4), 15–16. <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.321026>.

**View This Item Online:** <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/216956>

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.5962/p.321026>

**Permalink:** <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/partpdf/321026>

#### **Holding Institution**

Harvard University Botany Libraries

#### **Sponsored by**

BHL-SIL-FEDLINK

#### **Copyright & Reuse**

Copyright Status: Public domain. The BHL considers that this work is no longer under copyright protection.

This document was created from content at the **Biodiversity Heritage Library**, the world's largest open access digital library for biodiversity literature and archives. Visit BHL at <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org>.