

The Kushima-Zakura Cherry Tree at Omura Shrine

The Kushima-zakura (*Cerasus serrulata* ‘Kusimana’) tree was discovered on the grounds of Omura Shrine in 1947. It is a variety of Sato-zakura, a double-petaled cultivar group of cherries. The flowers are slightly smaller than those of the Omura-zakura, the other rare cherry variety discovered near Omura Shrine. It is unusual in that around half the flowers bloom in two stages, with a small inner flower that blooms slightly later than the main outer flower. Each Kushima-zakura flower typically has around 45 petals and a diameter of 4.5 centimeters at full bloom.

The Kushima-zakura variety was also identified by botanist and schoolteacher Toyama Saburo (1902–1986) on the grounds of Omura Shrine within Omura Park. Toyama had identified the Omura-zakura (*Cerasus serrulata* ‘Mirabilis’) cherry blossom six years earlier.

An estimated 200 Kushima-zakura trees grow in Omura Park, all propagated from the original tree. There is a cherry blossom-viewing festival at the park between late March and early April. The Kushima-zakura tree is a Natural Monument of Nagasaki Prefecture.