Kingdom: Plantae  
Division: Magnoliophyta  
Class: Magnoliopsida  
Order: Rosales  
Family: Rosaceae  

**ILLINOIS STATUS**  
common, native  

**wild black cherry**  
*Prunus serotina*

**FEATURES**
Wild black cherry is a deciduous tree that may attain a height of 75 feet and a trunk diameter of up to three feet. The thin, smooth, red-brown bark of the young tree changes to black with furrows as the tree ages. Leaves are arranged alternately on the stem. These simple, oblong or oval leaves may be up to six inches long. The green, smooth, shiny leaf is finely-toothed along the edges. The leafstalk is about one inch long with one or more red glands near the tip. Small flowers with five, white petals are produced. Flowers are borne in drooping clusters that may be six inches long. The fruit is a drupe (a seed enclosed in a hard, dry material that in turn is covered with a fleshy material). The spherical, fleshy, dark-purple drupe may be up to one-half inch in diameter.

**BEHAVIORS**
Wild black cherry may be found throughout Illinois. It grows in wood edges, fence rows, thickets and roadsides. Flowers are produced in May. The wood is lightweight, hard and strong. This light, red-brown wood is used to make cabinets and furniture. The fruit serves as a food source for wildlife species, who disperse the undigested seeds with their waste products.
bark
leaves, stems and fruits
Aquatic Habitats
none

Woodland Habitats
none

Prairie and Edge Habitats
edge