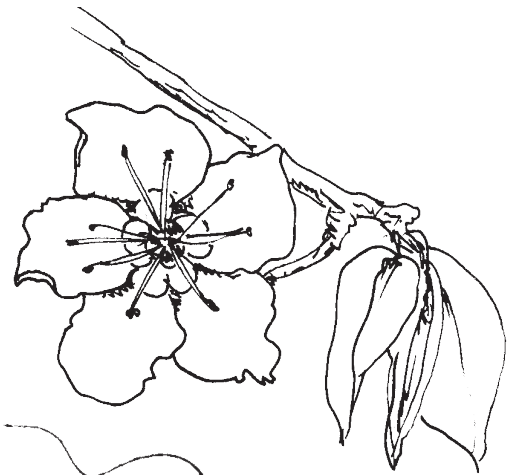
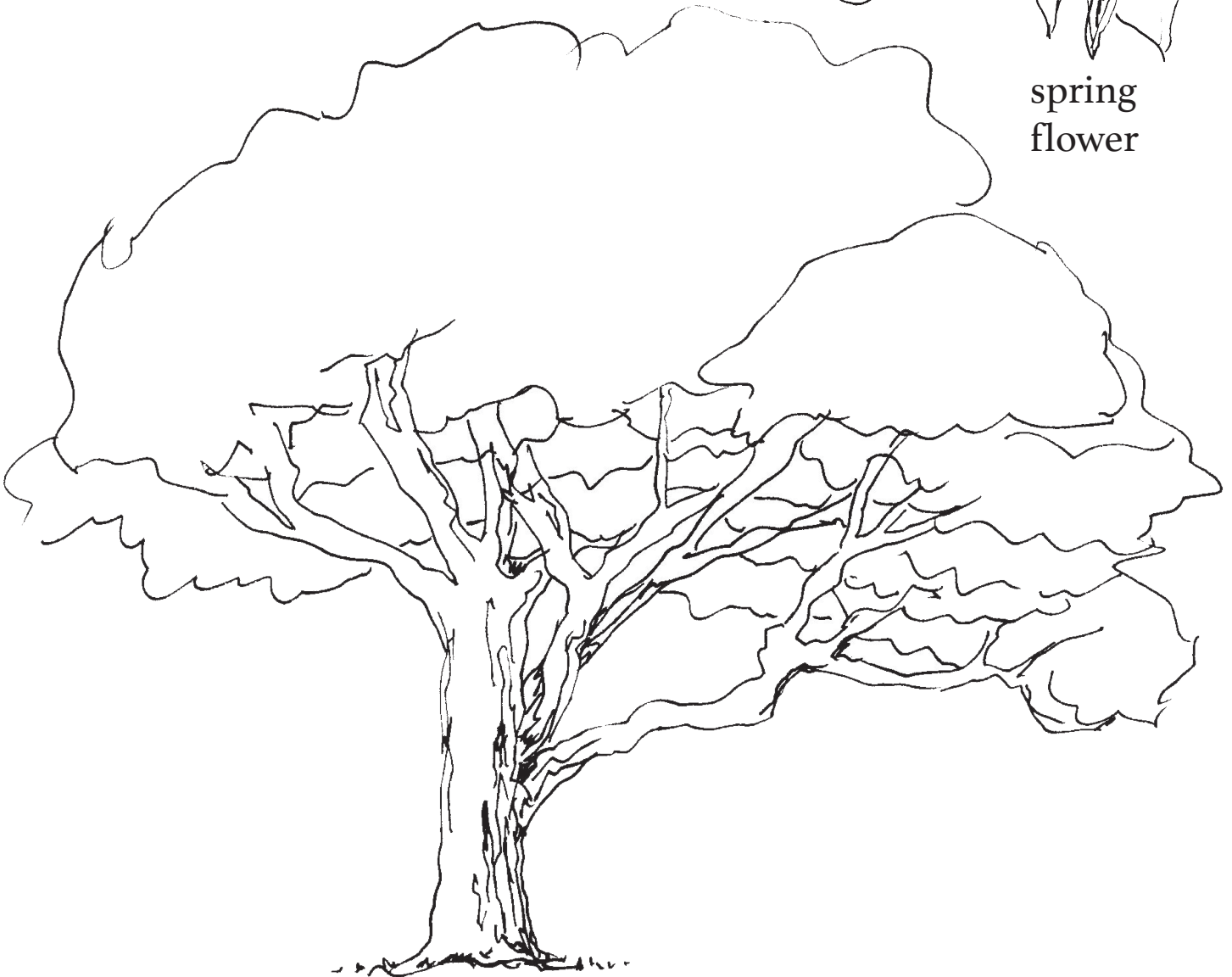


# Sand Pear

*Pyrus pyrifolia*

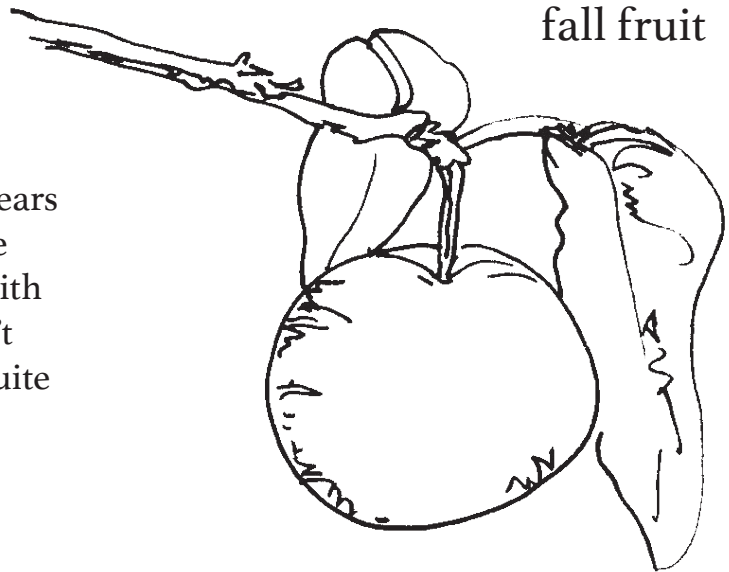


spring  
flower



If you're lucky enough to catch the Chinese sand pear in bloom in early May, you will be rewarded with a fantastic display of white flowers which look like a giant white cloud. Trees stay in bloom for up to a week. The flowers are pure white (with crimson anthers), 1 to 1½ inches across, with six to nine flowers held in a cluster (or corymb).

If you miss the spring flowers, you can admire fall fruit and other ornamental features of the sand pear. Come back in autumn when its lustrous dark green leaves turn orange to red, and the tree bears 1¼" fleshy fruits called pomes, which are brownish green to yellow and spotted with white. Unless you're a squirrel, you won't want to eat these pears, since they are quite hard, gritty, and sandy, with a puckery aftertaste.

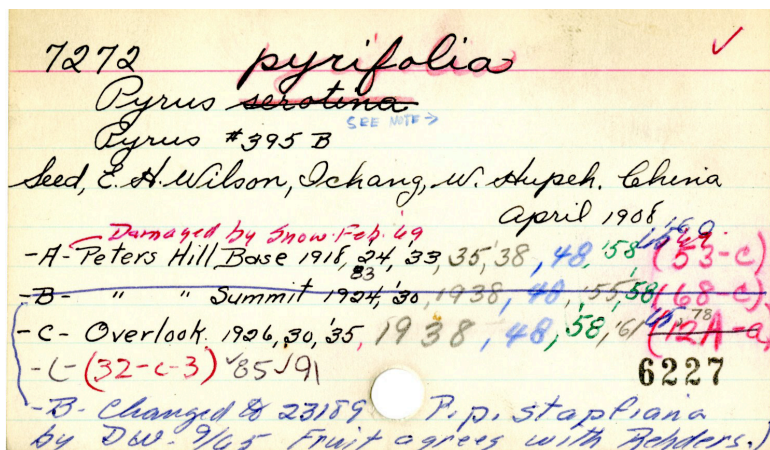


## A little history...

In 1907, the Arboretum's famed plant explorer Ernest Henry Wilson collected sand pear seeds from a wild tree in China, and sent them back to the United States. Three trees grew from the seeds and were planted in the Arboretum landscape. One of the original trees still stands on Bussey Hill in the Explorers Garden.

When Wilson collected it, the tree had no scientific name, so it was given the common name in Chinese, tang li zu. Over the years the species name has changed quite a bit. In the early 1900s the sand pear was named *Pyrus sinensis*. In 1915 this was changed to *Pyrus serotina*. Finally in 1926, the botanical community settled on *Pyrus pyrifolia*.

7272-C                      ROSACEAE  
 PYRUS PYRIFOLIA  
 SD - LINEAGE 7272 - 1908  
 W - CHINA - WILSON, E.H. 395  
 E.H. WILSON, ARNOLD ARB.  
 SAND PEAR  
 32 - NE



The index card at left is the original accession card for the sand pear. Above is the tree tag that you will find on the original tree near the top of Bussey Hill (originally called the "Overlook"). Notice that much of its history is recorded on the tree tag. You will find this information on tags for all Arboretum-accessioned plants.