

The U.S. National Arboretum was assigned to be the International Cultivar Registration Authority for *Cercis*[©]

D. Kidwell-Slak^a and M. Pooler

USDA/ARS/U.S. National Arboretum, Floral & Nursery Plants Research Unit, 3501 New York Ave., NE, Washington, DC 20002, USA.

INTRODUCTION/SIGNIFICANCE TO NURSERY INDUSTRY

Rebuds are a significant nursery crop for much of the American nursery industry. Eastern redbud (*Cercis canadensis*) are endemic and widely distributed from Canada to Florida. Southern variants (subsp. *texensis* and var. *mexicana*) grow natively in the southwest and a western species (*C. canadensis* var. *orbiculata*) grow natively west of the Rocky Mountains. In addition to the native American taxa, several Asian taxa are cultivated and represent a significant nursery crop in the United States. Although cultivated for over a century, there has recently been a large increase in the number of named cultivars on the market. With the large increase in named cultivars, it will be beneficial to the green industry and gardeners to create a checklist with cultivar description and general identifying information to help differentiate cultivars.

According to the latest (2014) USDA Census of Horticulture Specialties, rebuds were the fifth most valuable deciduous flowering tree crop in the USA, seventh most commonly grown flowering deciduous tree, and fourth highest value flowering deciduous tree per plant sold (\$26.76 plant⁻¹). Rebuds were grown in 1,272 nurseries in 44 states.

The popularity of rebuds is due, in part, to the availability of cultivars with diverse leaf color, habit, and flower color. Additionally, rebuds can be grown in a very wide range of environments and have very few diseases or pests.

NAMED CULTIVARS INCREASING

The increase in the number of named redbud cultivars has risen at an almost exponential rate since 2000 (Figure 1). To date, there are at least 70 named cultivars of redbud that have been named and described. Fifteen have been patented, 10 have trademarks, and 33 released since 2000.

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR HORTICULTURAL SCIENCE - NOMENCLATURE AND CULTIVAR REGISTRATION COMMISSION

International Society for Horticultural Science administers the International Cultivar Registration Authorities (ICRA) via the Nomenclature and Cultivar Registration Commission. Chief aims are:

To prevent duplicated uses of cultivar and group epithets and ensure names follow the latest edition of International Code of Nomenclature for Cultivated Plants (ICNCP).

It is voluntary, non-statutory system (no legal protection of plant name), self-policing of nomenclature, International in scope, depends on cooperation of everyone involved with creation and marketing of new plants, and all that is required is submission of name and descriptive information to ICRA.

Most popular cultivated plants have an ICRA (e.g., *Quercus*, *Buxus*, *Iris*, *Magnolia*, etc.). For plants without ICRA (e.g., *Deutzia*, *Hydrangea*, *Hypericum*, etc.), they are submitted to Unassigned Woody Genera ICRA (currently the U.S. National Arboretum). The U.S. National Arboretum was assigned to be the International Cultivar Registration Authority for *Cercis* in 2015.

^aE-mail: David.Kidwell-Slak@ars.usda.gov

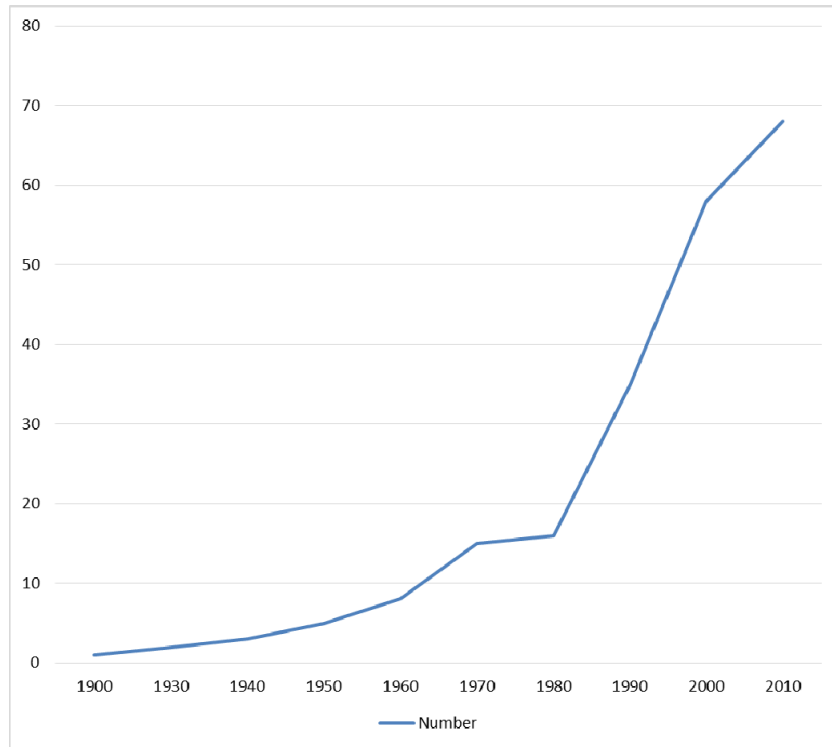


Figure 1. Approximate number of named *Cercis* cultivars by decade (1900-2016).