

Tokyo cherry trees reach full bloom

March 22 2013



A bird sits amid the cherry blossom at a park in Tokyo on March 20, 2013. Tokyo's cherry trees are in stunning full bloom, Japan's weather agency said, marking the second earliest blossoming in the capital on record.

Tokyo's cherry trees were in stunning full bloom on Friday, Japan's weather agency said, marking the second earliest blossoming in the capital on record.

The [national weather service](#) used Tokyo's central Yasukuni Shrine as a barometer to judge the peak of the season, which sees a riot of white and

delicate pinks exploding in parks, temple grounds, schools and on streets.

The spectacle signals the coming of spring and is marked by sometimes-raucous [gatherings](#) of friends, family or colleagues picnicking under the trees. Events can go on for many hours and often involve alcohol.

"High temperatures in early March are definitely one of the major factors behind the early full bloom in Tokyo," an agency official said.

On Saturday, Japan's weather agency, which has monitored cherry [blossom](#) since 1953, announced the official start of cherry blossom season in Tokyo. The earliest full blooming on record occurred in 2002.

Japanese culture prizes the perfect but delicate blossom, whose transience—they only last a week—is a reminder of the fragility of life.

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