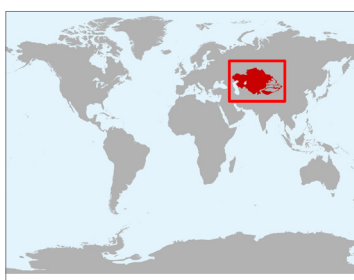




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Geographical range

Amazing Species: *Malus sieversii*

Malus sieversii is listed as 'Vulnerable' on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. Believed to be the primary ancestor of almost all varieties of the domesticated apple, *Malus sieversii* is found across a mountainous region of central Asia, with native populations occurring in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and China. The fruits of this species are the largest of any wild species of *Malus*, and include both edible and inedible varieties.

Malus sieversii faces a number of threats, including the loss and degradation of habitat due to agricultural expansion and development, genetic erosion (grafting of commercial varieties and hybridization) and overgrazing. Overall, it is suspected that rapid population declines throughout its range have exceeded 30% over the last three generations, while in Kazakhstan its habitat has declined by over 70% in the last 30 years.

Different populations of *Malus sieversii* exhibit significant variability, especially in their resistance to disease, and thus represent a valuable resource for the genetic improvement of the commercial apple. Consequently, considerable efforts are being made to preserve this species.

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