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Earliest cherry blossoms in Japan city in 600 years – 2nd April, 2021

Level 0

Cherry blossoms in Kyoto bloomed at their earliest in 600 years. They peaked a day earlier than the previous record set in 1409. Data on Kyoto's cherry blossoms go back 1,200 years to the year 812. Japan had warmer weather this year. Weather forecasters say climate change made the blossoms come earlier than normal.

Cherry blossoms are called "sakura" in Japan. People go to famous cherry blossom spots to have picnics. The blossoms help Japan's economy. A Japanese newspaper wrote: "Sakura has deeply influenced Japanese culture for centuries....Their fragility is seen as a symbol of life, death and rebirth."

Level 1

Cherry blossoms in Japan bloomed at their earliest in 600 years. Blossoms in Kyoto peaked on the 26th of March. This was a day earlier than the previous record set in 1409. Data on Kyoto's cherry blossoms go back 1,200 years to the year 812. Japan's imperial court wrote about the blooms in diaries. Japan had much warmer weather this year. Meteorologists say this is because of climate change. They say this is making plants blossom earlier than normal.

Cherry blossoms are important in Japanese culture. People look at cherry-blossom forecasts. The blossoms are called "sakura" in Japan. People go to famous cherry blossom spots to have picnics. The blossoms give Japan an important economic lift each spring. A Japanese newspaper explained their importance. It wrote: "Sakura has deeply influenced Japanese culture for centuries....Their fragility is seen as a symbol of life, death and rebirth."

Level 2

Cherry blossoms in Japan bloomed at their earliest in 600 years. Researchers say blossoms in the city of Kyoto peaked on the 26th of March. This peak was a day earlier than the previous record set in 1409. Data on Kyoto's cherry blossoms go back 1,200 years. As far back as the year 812, officials at Japan's imperial court wrote about the blooms in diaries. Japan had much warmer weather in the first few months of this year. Meteorologists say this is because of climate change. They say plants are flowering and blossoming earlier than normal because of global warming.

Cherry blossoms are important in Japanese culture. People keep a close eye on the news of blossoming times from cherry-blossom forecasts. The blossoms are called "sakura" in Japan. People plan trips to famous cherry blossom spots and have picnics under the sakura. The blossoms provide Japan with an important economic boost each spring. A Japanese newspaper explained the importance of sakura. It wrote: "Sakura has deeply influenced Japanese culture for centuries. It has regularly been used in poetry and literature. Their fragility is seen as a symbol of life, death and rebirth."

Level 3

Cherry blossoms in Kyoto, Japan have bloomed at their earliest date in 600 years. Researchers from Osaka University say blossoms in the city of Kyoto peaked on the 26th of March. The previous record for Kyoto was set in 1409, when the season reached its peak on the 27th of March. Data on cherry blossoms blooming in Kyoto go back 1,200 years. As far back as the year 812, officials at Japan's imperial court in Kyoto wrote details on the blooms in documents and diaries. Japan experienced much warmer weather in the first few months of this year. Meteorologists say this is because of climate change. They say many plants are flowering and blossoming earlier than normal because of global warming.

Cherry blossoms are an important part of Japanese culture. People keep a close eye on the news of blossoming times from forecasts made by the Japanese Meteorological Agency. The blossoms are called "sakura" in Japan. Many people plan trips to famous cherry blossom areas and spend hours having picnics under the sakura. The cherry blossoms also provide Japan with an important economic boost each spring. People come from all over the world to view them. Japan's Mainichi newspaper explained the importance of sakura. It wrote: "Sakura has deeply influenced Japanese culture for centuries. It has regularly been used in poetry and literature. Their fragility is seen as a symbol of life, death and rebirth."