



Fast Facts!
Pawpaw Tree
Asimina triloba
In the Pollinator Bed

- The largest fruit tree native to the United States; the Pawpaw was first recorded by the DeSoto expedition in the lower Mississippi Valley in 1541. The fruit was enjoyed by Native Americans and early European settlers alike including Presidents George Washington and Thomas Jefferson. Even Lewis and Clark sometimes subsisted on Pawpaw fruits during their 1804-1806 expedition.
- Resembling a green mango with the ungainly appearance of a small green potato, the Pawpaw may occur in clusters on the tree.
- Highly nutritious, the Pawpaw contains all the essential amino acids, has three times as much vitamin C as apples, twice as much as bananas, and one-third as much as oranges.
- The flowers attract flesh flies (Sarcophagidae), blow flies (Calliphoridae), and other flies; because the color of the maroon flower petals and the floral scent resemble rotting meat which attracts these pollinating flies.
- Larvae of the Zebra Swallowtail Butterfly feed exclusively on young leaves of the various Pawpaw species.
- Pawpaws are not susceptible to diseases in our more common fruit trees. Fungus may grow on the skin of the fruit, but this does not prevent it from being edible.
- To produce fruit, a Pawpaw flower must receive pollen from flowers on another tree.
- Rabbits and deer find the foliage unpalatable and therefore avoid browsing Pawpaw seedlings and saplings. The leaves, twigs, and bark of the Pawpaw contain natural insecticides known as acetogenins.
- Visit <https://caldwell.ces.ncsu.edu/2017/09/native-pawpaw-tree/> for more information.
- Visit www.plantnovanatives.org for information about other native plants.