

Pawpaw (*Asimina triloba*)

The Pawpaw is a deciduous, native, understory tree in the Annonaceae family. Its name is probably a modification of the Spanish papaya. It is native to Canada and the eastern U.S.A. where it grows in deep shade to full sunlight in moist, nutrient-rich forests. It will tolerate occasional wet or moist conditions but prefers good drainage and acidic soil.

The Pawpaw tree can grow to about 30 feet tall with a 25 foot spread. In spring, 6-petaled, purplish-brown flowers mature. In late summer to early fall, pawpaw produces an edible, sweet-tasting, and custard like fruit measuring 2.5 to 6 inches. The leaves turn a yellow color in the fall and provide interest.

Pawpaw does well in naturalized, riparian, or woodland areas. It is a flowering tree that attracts butterflies, pollinators, small mammals, and songbirds, which makes pawpaw a good addition to a butterfly, pollinator, or rain garden. Flies and beetles are beneficial pollinators attracted to the foul odor of flowers.