Snuff-box Tree

Oncoba spinosa



Snuff-box Tree
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 15 feet

Spread: 10 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 9

Other Names: Fried Egg Tree, Fried Egg Flower

Description:

This spiny shrub or small tree presents honey-fragrant, solitary white and yellow flowers that resemble fried eggs, followed by hard shelled fruit; attractive, shiny green foliage makes this one perfect as an accent plant or massed at the back of borders

Ornamental Features

Snuff-box Tree features showy fragrant white round flowers with yellow eyes along the branches from late spring to early summer. It has attractive dark green deciduous foliage which emerges chartreuse in spring. The glossy pointy leaves are highly ornamental but do not develop any appreciable fall color. However, the fruit can be messy in the landscape and may require occasional clean-up. The smooth tan bark adds an interesting dimension to the landscape.

Landscape Attributes

Snuff-box Tree is a multi-stemmed deciduous shrub with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its average texture blends into the landscape, but can be balanced by one or two finer or coarser trees or shrubs for an effective composition.

This is a relatively low maintenance shrub, and should only be pruned after flowering to avoid removing any of the current season's flowers. It is a good choice for attracting butterflies and hummingbirds to your yard. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Spiny

Snuff-box Tree is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Snuff-box Tree will grow to be about 15 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 10 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 1 foot from the ground, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 30 years.

This shrub does best in full sun to partial shade. It prefers to grow in average to moist conditions, and shouldn't be allowed to dry out. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. This species is not originally from North America.

Snuff-box Tree makes a fine choice for the outdoor landscape, but it is also well-suited for use in outdoor pots and containers. Its large size and upright habit of growth lend it for use as a solitary accent, or in a composition surrounded by smaller plants around the base and those that spill over the edges. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when grown in a container, it may not perform exactly as indicated on the tag - this is to be expected. Also note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.