Mexican Plum

Prunus mexicana



Mexican Plum
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 20 feet

Spread: 20 feet

Sunlight:

Hardiness Zone: 6

Description:

A small, upright non-suckering small tree, presenting showy fragrant white flowers in spring, and tasty purple-blue plums in late summer; quite compact and ornamental; needs full sun, well-drained soil and a pollinator

Edible Qualities

Mexican Plum is a small tree that is commonly grown for its edible qualities, although it does have ornamental merits as well. It produces purple round fruit (technically 'drupes') with blue overtones and chartreuse flesh which are usually ready for picking from late summer to early fall. Note that the fruits have hard inedible pits inside which must be removed before eating or processing. The fruits have a tart taste and a juicy texture.

The fruit are most often used in the following ways:

- Fresh Eating
- Baking
- Preserves
- Canning

Features & Attributes

Mexican Plum is smothered in stunning clusters of fragrant white flowers along the branches in early spring before the leaves. It has forest green deciduous foliage which emerges chartreuse in spring. The pointy leaves turn yellow in fall. The fruits are showy purple drupes with blue overtones, which are carried in abundance from mid to late summer. The fruit can be messy if allowed to drop on the lawn or walkways, and may require occasional clean-up.

This is a deciduous tree 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 plant will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and is best pruned in late winter once the threat of extreme cold has passed. It is a good choice for attracting birds, butterflies and squirrels to your yard. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Messy
- Disease

Aside from its primary use as an edible, Mexican Plum is sutiable for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Orchard/Edible Landscaping

Planting & Growing

Mexican Plum will grow to be about 20 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 20 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 4 feet 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 40 years or more. This variety requires a different selection of the same species growing nearby in order to set fruit.

This tree is quite ornamental as well as edible, and is as much at home in a landscape or flower garden as it is in a designated edibles garden. It should only be grown in full sunlight. It does best in average to evenly moist conditions, but will not tolerate standing water. 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 native to parts of North America.