Sunflower Paw Paw

Asimina triloba 'Sunflower'



Sunflower Paw Paw in fall
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 20 feet

Spread: 15 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 4

Other Names: Pawpaw Apple, False-Banana, Poor Man's Banana

Description:

This cultivar produces a high yield of edible fruit, similar in taste to a banana/pear with a custard consistency; fruit is sweet, rich, high in vitamins; flowers may have a disagreeable fetid odor; tree is a host for the zebra swallowtail butterfly

Edible Qualities

Sunflower Paw Paw is a small tree that is commonly grown for its edible qualities, although it does have ornamental merits as well. It produces large green oblong fruit with creamy white flesh which are usually ready for picking from mid to late summer. The fruits have a sweet taste with a mushy texture and a pleasant fragrance.

The fruit are most often used in the following ways:

- Fresh Eating
- Cooking
- Preserves
- Wine-Making

Features & Attributes

Sunflower Paw Paw features unusual lightly-scented nodding burgundy flowers with brown overtones from mid to late spring, which emerge from distinctive lime green flower buds. It has dark green deciduous foliage. The large oval leaves turn an outstanding lemon yellow in the fall. It features an abundance of magnificent green berries 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 multi-stemmed deciduous tree with a distinctive and refined pyramidal form. Its relatively coarse texture can be used to stand it apart from other landscape plants with finer foliage. This is a high maintenance plant that will require regular care and upkeep, and is best pruned in late winter once the threat of extreme cold has passed. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Suckering

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

- Accent
- Naturalizing And Woodland Gardens
- Orchard/Edible Landscaping

Planting & Growing

Sunflower Paw Paw will grow to be about 20 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 15 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 3 feet from the ground, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 40 years or more. This is a self-pollinating variety, so it doesn't require a second plant nearby to set fruit.

This tree can be integrated into a landscape or flower garden by creative gardeners, but is usually grown in a designated edibles garden. It does best in full sun to partial shade. 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, but has a definite preference for acidic soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This is a selection of a native North American species.