

North Carolina
Extension Gardener
Plant Toolbox

[Home](#) [Find a Plant](#) [Design Gallery](#) [Help](#) [Give Now](#) [Contact](#)

Search



Passiflora incarnata

Common Name(s): [Apricot Vine](#); [Maypop](#); [Passionflower](#); [Passion Flower](#); [Passion Vine](#)

Phonetic Spelling

pas-si-FLOR-ah in-kar-NAH-tuh

⚠ This plant has [medium severity poison characteristics](#).

[See below](#)

Description

Passionflower is a rapidly growing, trailing or climbing perennial or herbaceous perennial. It is a member of the passion vine family (Passifloraceae). It is native to the southeastern and south-central parts of the United States, as well as Bermuda. The genus name, *Passiflora*, relates to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. In the 15th to 16th century, Roman Catholic priests in Latin America used parts of the flower to symbolize the Passion of Christ. The species epithet is Latin for "flesh-colored," but the reference is obscure.

Passionflower is a rapid-growing, trailing vine that climbs by axillary tendrils. It is woody in warm winter climates but dies to the ground in cold winter climates. It grows in average-fertility, well-drained soils in full sun to part shade. Although this vine is tolerant of drought, a loose mulch can help to keep the roots cool. Under optimum growing conditions it spreads by root suckers to cover large areas. This is the hardiest of the passionflower vines, and it does not have to climb in order to produce flowers. If a bushy growth habit is preferred, pinch the vines back after the first growing season.

This plant is moderately resistant to damage from deer. The showy flowers and edible fruit make it an excellent choice for an edible, an arbor, pergola, trellis, fence or wall near a patio, where its showy flowers can be enjoyed. This plant has an extreme flammability rating and should not be planted within the defensible space of your home. Select plants with a [low flammability](#) rating for the sites nearest your home.

Insects, Diseases, or Other Plant Problems: No serious insect or disease problems. The roots can spread aggressively, and in poorly drained wet soils root rot can occur, especially in the winter.

Native Woodland Garden, Durham

Pollinator Garden in Partial Shade

Attributes:

Genus:

Passiflora

Species:

incarnata

Family:

Passifloraceae

Uses (Ethnobotany):

It was used medicinally by Native Americans. They would poultice the root to be used for boils, cuts, bruises, earaches, and inflammation. It was also cooked in teas that were used to sooth nerves.

Life Cycle:

Perennial

Woody

Recommended Propagation Strategy:

Root Cutting

Seed

Country Or Region Of Origin:

Central & E. U.S.A., Bermuda

Distribution:

AL , AR , DC , DE , FL , GA , IL , IN , KS , KY , LA , MD , MO , MS , NC , OH , OK , PA , SC , TN , TX , VA , WV

Fire Risk Rating:

extreme flammability

Wildlife Value:

This plant supports provides nectar for pollinators and is a larval host plant for several butterflies. The Gulf Fritillary (*Agraulis vanillae*) appear from January-November in the north and throughout the year in southern Florida and Texas. Variegated Fritillary (*Euptoieta claudia*) has four broods from February-December in the souther and three broods from April-October in the north. Zebra Heliconian (*Heliconius charithonia*) appears all year in Florida and Texas and appears in other northern states during warm months. Hummingbirds and butterflies nectar from the flowers in the summer. Its fruit may be eaten by songbirds, small mammals and some larger mammals.

Play Value:

Attractive Flowers

Attracts Pollinators

Wildlife Food Source

Climbing Method:

Tendrils

Edibility:

Ripened maypops can be eaten fresh off the vine or made into jelly.

Whole Plant Traits:

Plant Type:

Edible

Ground Cover

Herbaceous Perennial

Native Plant

Perennial

Poisonous

Vine

Wildflower

Woody Plant Leaf Characteristics:

Deciduous

Habit/Form:

Climbing

Spreading

Growth Rate:

Rapid

Maintenance:

Medium

Texture:

Medium

Appendage:

Tendrils

Cultural Conditions:

Light:

Full sun (6 or more hours of direct sunlight a day)

Partial Shade (Direct sunlight only part of the day, 2-6 hours)

Soil Texture:

Clay

High Organic Matter

Loam (Silt)

Sand

Soil Drainage:

Good Drainage

Moist

Occasionally Dry

Available Space To Plant:

12-24 feet

NC Region:

Coastal

Mountains

Piedmont

USDA Plant Hardiness Zone:

5a, 5b, 6a, 6b, 7a, 7b, 8a, 8b, 9a, 9b

Fruit:

Fruit Color:

Gold/Yellow

Green

Orange

Fruit Value To Gardener:

Edible

Display/Harvest Time:

Fall

Summer

Fruit Type:

Berry

Fruit Length:

1-3 inches

Fruit Description:

Fleshy, leathery egg-shaped, fruits called maypops appear from July to October and mature to a yellowish color with brown seeds in fall. They "pop" when crushed.

Flowers:

Flower Color:

- Blue
- Pink
- Purple/Lavender
- White

Flower Inflorescence:

- Head

Flower Value To Gardener:

- Edible
- Fragrant
- Long Bloom Season
- Showy

Flower Bloom Time:

- Spring
- Summer

Flower Shape:

- Crown

Flower Petals:

- 7 - 20 petals/rays
- Colored Sepals

Flower Size:

- 1-3 inches

Flower Description:

White with purple crown fringed flowers having 10 white petals and sepals and a central crown of pinkish-purple filaments. The flowers bloom in summer and are fragrant. Flowers bloom from May to July.

Leaves:

Woody Plant Leaf Characteristics:

- Deciduous

Leaf Color:

- Green

Deciduous Leaf Fall Color:

- Gold/Yellow

Leaf Type:

- Simple

Leaf Arrangement:

- Alternate

Leaf Shape:

- Palmasect

Leaf Margin:

- Lobed
- Serrate

Hairs Present:

- No

Leaf Width:

- 3-6 inches

Leaf Description:

Leaves are three-lobed and dark green above light below toothed with a pair of prominent glands on the leaf stalk. It has a yellow fall color.

Bark:

Bark Color:

- Green

Surface/Attachment:

- Smooth

Bark Description:

Its bark is green and smooth and coarsely grained.

Stem:

Stem Is Aromatic:

- No

Landscape:

Landscape Location:

- Patio
- Recreational Play Area
- Vertical Spaces

Landscape Theme:

- Butterfly Garden
- Drought Tolerant Garden
- Edible Garden
- Native Garden
- Pollinator Garden

Design Feature:

- Border
- Mass Planting
- Screen/Privacy

Attracts:

- Bees
- Butterflies
- Hummingbirds
- Pollinators
- Songbirds

Resistance To Challenges:

- Deer
- Drought
- Heat

Problems:

- Poisonous to Humans
- Problem for Cats
- Problem for Children
- Problem for Dogs
- Problem for Horses

Poisonous to Humans:

Poison Severity:

- Medium

Poison Symptoms:

Severe nausea, vomiting, drowsiness, and episodes of irregular heartbeat. Consumption of leaves in "herbal medicine" is not recommended.

Poison Toxic Principle:

- cyanogenic glycosides

Causes Contact Dermatitis:

- No

Poison Part:

- Leaves
- Stems