



## common pawpaw

*Asimina triloba*

Kingdom: Plantae  
Division/Phylum: Anthophyta  
Class:  
Order:  
Family:

### FEATURES

The deciduous common pawpaw tree rarely grows to a height greater than 40 feet or a trunk diameter more than 10 inches. Its bark is dark brown, thin and has shallow fissures. The simple leaves are arranged alternately on the stem. Each leaf is lance-shaped or elliptical and smooth along the edges. The leaf may grow to 12 inches long and six inches wide on a very short leafstalk. Flowers are borne singly and are green at first, becoming maroon later. Each flower has six petals. The green-yellow fruit is thick and oblong, up to six inches long. Each fruit has a yellow edible flesh and several dark brown seeds. The fruit ripens in September.

### BEHAVIORS

The common pawpaw may be found in the southern two-thirds of Illinois, growing in woods and thickets. This tree flowers in April and May when its leaves begin to unfold. Many pawpaws are often found growing together in a colony. The wood is soft and has few uses. The fruit is a source of food for wildlife.

### HABITATS

- bottomland forests
- coniferous forest
- southern Illinois lowlands
- upland deciduous forest

### ILLINOIS STATUS

- common
- endangered
- threatened
- native
- exotic

### ILLINOIS RANGE

Permanent resident: southern 2/3

Summer resident:

Migrant:

Winter resident:

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Illinois Department of Natural Resources. 1999.  
Biodiversity of Illinois, Volume 2: Woodland Habitats CD-ROM.