

Paw Paw Hut



Welcome to the Paw Paw Hut!

This fairy house looks a lot like a very special part of the pawpaw tree—the pawpaw fruit!

Pawpaws are the largest edible fruits that are native to North America, and taste like a cross between a mango and a banana.

The fruit ripens in late summer, and they are enjoyed by opossums, foxes, squirrels, raccoons, birds, and humans alike. When hiking the trails of Piscataway Park, you may even come across the tell-tale signs that a critter has been enjoying a pawpaw feast!

A perfect pair



If you happen to see a Zebra Swallowtail butterfly float by, it's likely there's a stand of pawpaw trees nearby.

The leaves (especially young leaves) of the pawpaw tree are the sole source of food in this region for the Zebra Swallowtail caterpillars.

The pair may have even co-evolved together: The common pawpaw (*asimina triloba*) and Zebra Swallowtail are both the only members of their respective families that live this far north—with most of their relatives found in subtropical climates.

Pawpaw Tree

Asimina triloba

The pawpaw is a small, deciduous tree with smooth, gray bark with light bumps.

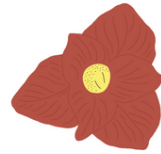


Broad leaves are

simple

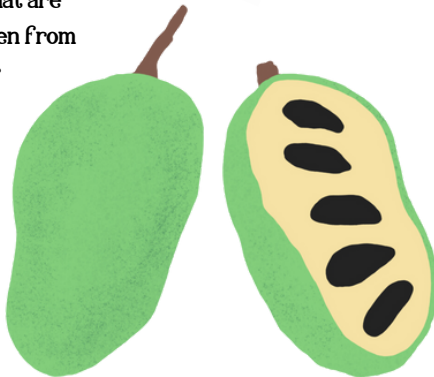
elliptical

smooth



Maroon, bell-shaped flowers are
pollinated by flies and beetles

Large, oblong fruits that are
light green in color ripen from
August–October



Can you find the stand of pawpaws in the fairy grove? Head to number 1 on the map and look for small trees with long, elliptical leaves. You may even see some fruit hanging from the branches!

