

Annona glabra

Annona glabra is a tropical fruit tree in the family Annonaceae, in the same genus as the Soursop and Cherimoya. Common names include **pond apple**, **alligator apple** (so called because American alligators often eat the fruit), **swamp apple**, **corkwood**, **bobwood**, and **monkey apple**.^[1] The tree is native to Florida in the United States, the Caribbean, Central and South America, and West Africa.^[2] It is common in the Everglades. It grows in swamps, is tolerant of saltwater, and cannot grow in dry soil.

1 Description

The trees grow to a height of around 10–12 m. They have thin, gray trunks and sometimes grow in clumps. The leaves are ovate to oblong with an acute tip, 8–15 cm long and 4–6 cm broad with a prominent midrib. The upper surface is light to dark green. The fruit is oblong to spherical and apple-sized or larger, 7–15 cm long and up to 9 cm diameter, and falls when it is green or ripening yellow. It disperses by floating to new locations, and it is food for many animal species such as wild boar. Reproduction begins after 2 years. A fruit contains 100 or more pumpkin-like seeds, about 1 cm. long.^[3]

2 Uses

Unlike the other *Annona* species, the pulp of the fruit when ripe is yellow to orange instead of white.^[4] The fruit is edible for humans and its taste is reminiscent of ripe Honeydew melon. It can be made into jam and it is a popular ingredient of fresh fruit drinks in Maldives.^[5]

The flesh is sweet-scented and agreeable in flavor, but it has never attained general popular use unlike Soursop and other related fruits. Experiments in South Florida have been made in an attempt to use it as a superior rootstock for Sugar-apple or Soursop. While the grafts initially appear to be effective a high percentage of them typically fail over time. Soursop on Pond-apple rootstock has a dwarfing effect.

A 2008 study in the journal, *Anticancer Research*, suggests that its alcoholic seed extract contains anticancer compounds that could be used pharmaceutically.^[6]

3 Invasive species

It is a very troublesome invasive species in northern Queensland in Australia and Sri Lanka, where it grows in estuaries and chokes mangrove swamps. Its seedlings carpet the banks and prevent other species from germinating or thriving. It also affects farms as it grows along fencelines and farm drains. It also invades and transforms undisturbed areas.^[7] In Sri Lanka it was introduced as a grafting stock for custard apples and spread into wetlands around Colombo.^[3]

4 See also

- List of plants of Caatinga vegetation of Brazil

5 References

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- "Pond apple (*Annona glabra*) weed management guide", Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities, Canberra, at <http://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/invasive/weeds/publications/guidelines/wons/pubs/a-glabra.pdf>

6 External links

- Pond-apple as an invasive species in Australia

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