

# Discovery Garden

## featured plant for

### September

## Passion Flower

*Passiflora incarnata*

Common names include Purple Passion Flower, True Passion Flower, Wild Passion Vine, Maypop, Wild Apricot, and Ocoee.

It is a fast growing perennial vine with climbing or trailing stems and numerous twisting tendrils. The intricate flowers feature a showy purple and white corona (a radiating structure of narrow appendages between the petals and the stamen). The white and purple tinged flowers develop into an egg-sized fleshy fruit that is often referred to as a maypop. These greenish berries turn yellowish-orange at maturity.

The plant serves as a larval host for butterflies and the fruit may be eaten by songbirds and some mammals. The plant was historically believed to have medicinal properties that made them useful in treating a variety of ailments.

Passion flowers are one of Tennessee's two State Wildflowers. Fossilized plant material from ancient passion flowers have been discovered on the Gray Fossil Site.

### Fun Facts:

- Though not overly sweet, the fruit can be used for jellies, jams, and desserts, and the juice as a drink flavoring.
- The roots were crushed and used medicinally by Native Americans for boils, cuts, bruises, ear aches, and inflammation.
- The Cherokee in the Tennessee region called it Ocoee; the Ocoee River and valley are named after this plant.



### Growing Size:

Aggressive, fast-growing perennial vine that can grow to cover fences, walls, or trellises

### Best Viewing Months:

August through October

### Pollinators:

Bumblebees, Carpenter bees

**Hands On!**  
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