

PAWPAW
Asimina triloba



ZEBRA
SWALLOWTAIL
Protographium marcellus

GARDEN PHLOX
Phlox paniculata

PAWPAW

Asimina triloba

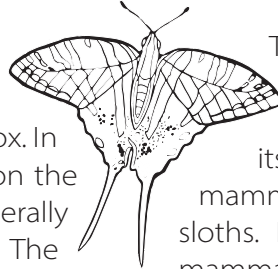
ZEBRA SWALLOWTAIL

Protographium marcellus

GARDEN PHLOX

Phlox paniculata

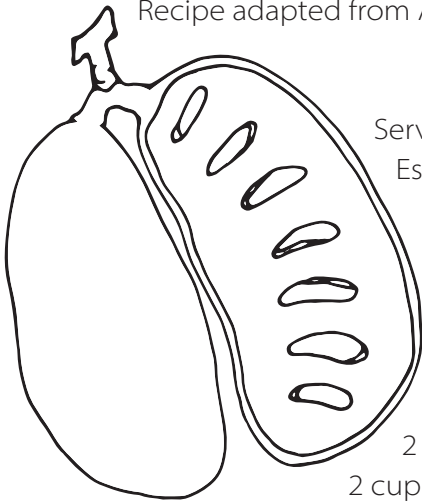
With its straw-like tongue called a **proboscis**, the Zebra Swallowtail sips nectar from flat-topped flowers such as Garden Phlox. In their **larva** stage, the caterpillars feed only on the leaves of the Pawpaw tree, which are generally avoided by other insects and deer, too. The flowers of the Pawpaw tree are of no interest to Zebra Swallowtails. Instead, the blooms produce a rotting meat smell to attract flies and beetles that will pollinate them. The Pawpaw is the largest edible fruit native to North America, and is the state fruit of Ohio. It is shaped like a potato, yellow in color, and tastes similar to a banana with hints of vanilla and citrus. The large, dark seeds can be dried and crafted into jewelry.



This unusual tree grows throughout the eastern U.S., but is less common than it once was due to habitat loss and the extinction of its original seed dispersers. These were large mammals such as mastodons and giant ground sloths. Now, Pawpaw seeds are spread by smaller mammals, such as squirrels and raccoons, though they may not be as efficient at dispersing them. The Pawpaw's ability to form dense patches by growing new shoots from their roots has likely helped it to remain in the landscape. Other wildlife such as the opossum, fox, and various birds eat this wild fruit as well. People can be seed dispersers too! You can plant the seeds and be rewarded with edible fruits in your own yard and know you are helping to preserve this unique native plant species.

Pawpaw Fruit Leather

Recipe adapted from AllRecipes.com



Servings: 16

Estimated Time: 6 hours 30 minutes

Ingredients:

1 cup sugar

¼ cup lemon juice

4 cups peeled and coarsely chopped Pawpaw fruit, seeds removed

2 cups apples, cored, peeled, and coarsely chopped

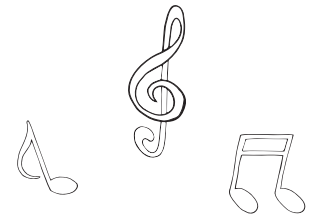
2 cups pears, cored, peeled, and coarsely chopped

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 150 °F.
2. Add all ingredients to a blender and **purée** until smooth.
3. Lay out parchment paper on baking sheets and evenly spread purée in one thin layer.
4. Bake for 5-6 hours with the oven door slightly open (the drying process is complete when the surface is not sticky and the leather tears easily). You may also use a dehydrator for this step.
5. Remove the sheets from the oven, cut leather into strips, and roll strips (store the rolls in an airtight container).

Make sure to freeze any Pawpaws you don't use right away because they spoil quickly.

Trouble finding Pawpaws? Experiment with different fruit that is in season.



Have you ever heard the song "Way Down Yonder in the Pawpaw Patch?"