Elephant Apple

Dillenia indica

Height: 26 feet

Spread: 13 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 10a

Description:

A medium sized, evergreen tree with a rounded crown, suitable for large containers; produces large leaves with deep ridges and impressed veins; large, round green-yellow fruit with a fibrous pulp is sour to taste, great for curries, jams, and jellies



Elephant Apple
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Edible Qualities

Elephant Apple is a medium-sized tree that is commonly grown for its edible qualities. It produces chartreuse round fruit which are typically harvested when mature. The fruits have a sour taste and a crisp texture.

The fruit are most often used in the following ways:

- Eating When Cooked/Prepared
- Cooking
- Preserves
- Pickling



Elephant Apple foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Features & Attributes

Elephant Apple has rich green evergreen foliage on a tree with a round habit of growth. The textured oval leaves remain green throughout the winter.

This is an evergreen tree with a more or less rounded form. Its average texture blends into the landscape, but can be balanced by one or two finer or coarser trees or shrubs for an effective composition. This is a relatively low maintenance plant, and should not require much pruning, except when necessary, such as to remove dieback. It is a good choice for attracting birds and bees to your yard. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Aside from its primary use as an edible, Elephant Apple is sutiable for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Vertical Accent
- Orchard/Edible Landscaping
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Elephant Apple will grow to be about 26 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 13 feet. It has a high canopy with a typical clearance of 5 feet from the ground, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 15 years.

This plant is typically grown in a designated edibles garden. It does best in full sun to partial shade. It prefers to grow in average to moist conditions, and shouldn't be allowed to dry out. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is quite intolerant of urban pollution, therefore inner city or urban streetside plantings are best avoided. This species is not originally from North America..

Elephant Apple is a good choice for the edible garden, but it is also well-suited for use in outdoor pots and containers. Because of its height, it is often used as a 'thriller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the center of the pot, surrounded by smaller plants and those that spill over the edges. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when grown in a container, it may not perform exactly as indicated on the tag - this is to be expected. Also note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.