

WILD FLOWERING PEAR

Pyrus calleryana



Characteristics

- Type: Tree
- Zone: 5 to 9
- Height: 25.00 to 35.00 feet
- Spread: 20.00 to 25.00 feet
- Bloom Time: April
- Bloom Description: White
- Flower: Showy
- Sun: Full sun
- Water: Dry to medium
- Maintenance: Low
- Leaf: Good Fall
- Attracts: Birds
- Tolerate: Drought, Clay Soil, Air Pollution

Culture

Best grown in humusy, well-drained loams with consistent moisture in full sun. Tolerates some drought once established. Adaptable to a wide range of soil conditions including heavy clays. Generally tolerant of urban conditions. Early spring flowers may be damaged by frost. Prune as needed in winter. Narrow-oval, glossy dark green leaves have distinctively wavy margins. Leaves dance in the breeze and turn attractive reddish-purple to bronze-red in fall. Creamy white flowers in dense corymbs appear in early spring.

Noteworthy characteristics

Pyrus calleryana, commonly called Callery pear, is native to China and Taiwan. It is an upright-branched ornamental tree. It grows pyramidal to columnar in youth, but tends to become oval to spreading with age. It is noted for its early profuse spring bloom, quality glossy green foliage and often excellent fall color. It produces small, inedible, greenish-yellow ½” which are of little practical value or ornamental interest. Joseph Callery, a French missionary, discovered and collected this plant in China in 1858. In 1917, seed was brought to the U.S. from China for hybridization experiments aimed at improving fireblight resistance for the common fruiting pear. The experiments generally proved unsuccessful. In the 1950s, callery pear emerged in U.S. commerce as a promising new ornamental tree. By the 1980s, concern grew about both overplanting and structural weakness resulting in limb breakage from wind, ice and snow. Today, additional concerns about invasiveness as non-sterile forms are escaping cultivation and naturalizing in some areas.

Problems

‘Aristocrat’ is an attractive ornamental flowering tree for the landscape. It is susceptible to limb breakage or splitting from strong winds, snow or ice, but has better structural strength than some other callery cultivars such as *P. calleryana* ‘Bradford’. It is also susceptible to fireblight. Viable seed can be produced when Callery pear cultivars cross-pollinate.

Garden Uses

Symmetrically attractive narrow shape makes this cultivar a good selection for a variety of sites. Group or specimen. Small shade tree. May be used as a street tree.

Courtesy of Missouri Botanical Society Plant Finder