

Annona

Annona squamosa



ASOCIACIÓN
FLAAR
MESOAMÉRICA



Photo: Nicholas Hellmuth

Annona

Annona squamosa



Annona squamosa grows at altitudes of 0 meters to 2000 meters. The species does well in hot dry climates, and at much lower altitudes than many of the other fruit bearers in its family, native to tropical America and India.

The tree grows as tall as 3 to 8 meters and is very similar to the Soursop tree. The leaves are deciduous and are arranged on small hairy petioles that are oblong and have a blunt tip that is approximately 2-6cm long and 2-5cm wide.

The leaves on the upper side are dull green, pale on both surfaces and mostly hairless. The fruit has a delicious white pulp, and is popular in markets in tropical America.



Pollinated by beetles, the flowering occurs from late February to April.

When I was in university I took an ethnobotany course and learned some lesser known facts about this plant. For example, there are medicinal applications of this species. The custard apple tree's leaves and bark contain annonaine, an alkaloid. Thus, the root of the tree can be used in the treatment of dysentery, while the bark can be used to stop diarrhea. In addition, a decoction of the leaves can be used as a cold remedy, and with a little bit of white honey it can clear the urinary tract.



Dra Poll, says the seeds have bortifacient and insecticidal properties and can therefore be useful in destroying lice living in hair. In addition, the fruit itself can be used in the making of ice creams & milk beverages.



