

Chickasaw Plum var. Guthrie (*Prunus augustifolia*)

The Chickasaw Plum tree is a deciduous shrub or small tree which naturally occurs in thickets, pastures, fields, and along hedgerows and river banks. It is an easily-grown, low-maintenance tree or shrub that tends to sprout from the base of the trunk, forming multi stemmed thickets. This is the form most commonly seen in its native habitat on old fields and on other disturbed sites. It makes a nice addition to a border in the back yard and is well suited for planting around a patio or deck although it does not form a neat crown of its own accord and looks a little unkempt during the winter. The crown tends to lean to one side or the other. Occasional pruning can significantly improve the form of the tree.

Beautiful, fragrant 5-petaled white flowers appear along the stems in March before the leaves which are toothed, narrow, bright green and 1-3" long. The branches and twigs are an attractive reddish-brown and sometimes thorny.



Zones 5 - 9
Mature Height/Spread 15-25 feet
Mature Form Rounded clump (if well pruned)
Growth Rate Rapid
Sun Exposure Full - Partial Sun
Soil Moisture Drought tolerant
Soil Type Widely adaptable - it tolerates sandy or clay soil but does poorly in alkaline pH.
Flower Color White and Pink
Fall Color Yellow
Fruit Color..... Yellow to Red
Fruit Length 0.5 to 1 inch
Fruit attracts birds; mammals; no significant litter problem
Propagation seeds
Invasive potential seeds itself into the landscape
Pests/Diseases none are of major concern. Tent caterpillars can defoliate trees and could weaken them with repeated defoliations.
Pest resistance long-term health not usually affected by pests

The edible fruit are small, cherry-like, red to yellow plums which ripen in early to mid summer. Although they may be eaten raw, they are tart and are therefore more often used in preserves and jellies. Native Americans regularly consumed the fruit fresh or dried it for winter. The ripe fruit is eaten by deer, bear, fox and raccoon.

Resources

<http://hort.ufl.edu/>

<http://www.naturehills.com/>

<http://plants.usda.gov/>