

Custard Apple

Annona spp. · Custard apple family

DIFFICULTY Moderate

TYPE Deciduous or semi-deciduous perennial tree

MATURITY 3–5 years to first fruit



SUN
Full sun,
sheltered



WATER
Regular



SOIL PH
6.0–6.5



SPACING
4–6m



DEPTH
as per pot

01 Often needs hand pollination

Custard apple flowers have a biology that makes natural pollination unreliable in home gardens — many growers hand-pollinate with a small brush to get a good fruit set.



loose stake, first year

02 Planting

METHOD	Plant with the root flare at soil level; stake young trees.
SOIL	Well-drained, moderately fertile.
TIMING	Plant in spring, warm frost-free zones.

Planting timing varies significantly by Australian climate zone. Set your zone above (or use the Find My Climate Zone tool) for guidance tailored to your own area.

04 Problems

- **Poor fruit set** — natural pollination is often unreliable; hand-pollinate.
- **Fruit fly** — net or bag developing fruit.
- **Mealybug** — check developing fruit and treat with horticultural oil.
- **Frost damage** — vulnerable while young.

03 Growing care

- Hand-pollinate flowers with a small brush for reliable fruit set.
- Water regularly through the growing season.
- Feed lightly after harvest.
- Protect from frost while young.

05 Harvest & storage

SIGNS	Skin segments soften slightly and colour lightens between them.
METHOD	Cut with a short stem attached, handle gently — fruit bruises easily.
CURING	Ripen at room temperature for a few days.
STORAGE	Ripe fruit in the fridge, a couple of days.
PRESERVING	See Freezing Produce (freezing a harvest surplus) or Dehydrating (dried tropical fruit) for ways to keep a harvest surplus.

06 Companions & rotation

PLANT NEARBY	AVOID NEARBY	ROTATION NOTE
Native groundcovers	Frost-prone positions	Not applicable — long-lived perennial tree.