

Passion Flower



Passiflora Caerulea

This vining perennial is growing up the steel support cable of the electricity pole. It produces large, 4-inch pale blue blossoms. Passion Flower fruit are egg-shaped, orange and edible but not very noteworthy. Passion Flower Vine is native to Southern Brazil and Argentina. If it dies back due to a severe freeze it has been known to grow back from its deep roots.

Gardeners grow Passion Flower from seed, but the flower seed can be slow to germinate. It actually has a chemical in the seed to keep germination slow. It is recommended to soak the flower seed 24 hours before planting and sow the Passion Flower seeds 1/4-inch-deep in good compost or potting soil. In place of soaking in water, you can soak them in pulpy passion fruit juice. The acid helps break down the seed shell and helps in germination. Keep soil damp, but not

too wet. It is best to start Passion Flower seeds in containers. Once Passion Flower seedlings have 4 - 5 leaves, they can be hardened off and transplanted into the garden. Passion Flower plants need to be well watered throughout the summer months, watering infrequently but deeply to encourage deep root growth. During the winter months keep the soil on the dry side so it will go semi-dormant.

Passion flowers grow best and produce the most flowers in full sun, when they may also produce fruits in form of orange /yellow oval fruits. Passion flower will grow in any soil, alkaline or acid, and in moist soil provided it is well drained.

Passion flowers require little or no maintenance and can be vigorous growing up to 8-12 meters.

The Latin name for Passion flower, is *Passiflora*, so called after the Passion of Christ. It is said that the stigmas and anthers represent the nails on the cross and the wounds.

