

Yellow Butterfly Vine



Common Name: **Yellow Butterfly Vine.** This name comes from the greenish, butterfly shaped seedpods the plant produces (but it attracts butterflies, too).

Botanical Name: *Mascagnia macroptera*

Light: Sun to partial shade.

Size: 15 to 20 feet tall and wide vine

Water: Moderate

Bloom: Spring to fall

Cultivation: Prefers rich, well-drained soil. Plant the frost-tender vine on the south or east side for winter protection.

Description: Fast-growing vine that reaches 10-12 feet high. It produces clusters of bright-yellow flowers from spring to frost. While many other plants are touted as spring-to-frost bloomers, this one is the real deal. Evergreen vine that will easily train itself to a trellis or fence. If left unsupported, this plant will twine on itself to produce a mounding shrub or even a groundcover. This is fairly drought tolerant but looks much better with regular watering through the dry season.

Range/Origin: Mexico. This plant is often listed as being from Central America but it grows as far south as Brazil. It was in fact noted by Joseph Banks at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (1768).

Uses: With great heat tolerance, it's well suited for sites with western exposures. Grow it against walls, on arbors and against mailboxes and light posts. Another great attribute is the plant's incredible heat tolerance. It's virtually impervious to the baking

sun and well suited for west-facing walls and places that receive reflected heat in summer. It's a fast grower, reaching 10-12 feet high, and also grows in partial shade.

Hardiness: *M. macroptera* is considered hardy just to USDA Hardiness Zone 8, but could survive Zone 7 if planted in a protected spot. However, with its fast growth, it is also a good candidate as an annual vine in Northern climates. It could easily reach heights in a few months that could be enjoyed by homeowners before being killed by winter freezes.

Propagation: Easy from seed or semi-softwood cuttings taken in late spring or early fall. From semi-softwood cuttings, plants in 4" containers can be rooted and ready to transplant in just under three months. Once transferred to a one-gallon container, the transplant can be finished (rooted-out and ready for the final destination!)