

SCNPS TOP 10 SOUTH CAROLINA NATIVE VINES



The following are flowering vines native to South Carolina recommended for use as climbers for fence or trellis, or a few as ground covers. This list is not exhaustive and in no particular order of preference.



Purple Passion flower or Maypop (*Passiflora incarnata*), is a hardy and rapid-growing perennial that can be used as either ground cover climbing vine. It prefers part sun with late afternoon shade and is drought tolerant but appreciates mulch to keep the roots cool and is reasonably deer resistant. Under optimum growing conditions it spreads by root suckers to cover large areas and you can pinch the vines back after the first growing season to promote a bushy growth. The fruit is edible and some people find it has a calming effect. The flowers bloom mid-summer and are exotically beautiful.

For more info: <https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/passiflora-incarnata/>



Yellow Passion Flower (*Passiflora lutea*) is more winter hardy and better behaved than its purple cousin, and maintains its foliage through milder winters. It can climb by tendril to 20 feet in height without damaging any trellises or structures. Blooming late summer to fall it attracts bees and butterflies and other pollinators and is host plant to the Gulf Fritillary, Zebra Heliconia, and Variegated Fritillary Butterfly. The flowers are followed by small black berries that are eaten by birds and mammals but the plant is resistant to deer damage. It will climb or spread as a ground cover, and is better behaved than its purple cousin.

For more info: <https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/passiflora-lutea/>



Carolina Jessamine (*Gelsemium sempervirens*) This hummingbird favorite is the sweet-scented South Carolina State Flower. When grown in full sun and rich well-drained soils, it can grow quickly up fence or trellis to 20 feet as a twining vine after 3-4 seasons, or, if unsupported by fence or trellis, it makes an excellent bush ground cover. Blooming February to May, its semi-evergreen foliage bronzes nicely in winter while retaining some screening benefit. Pruning, which is best done soon after it finishes flowering, is generally only needed for shape and training to its support. It does have a high flammability rating so keep distant from structures. It also has poison characteristics so requires some care when handling.

For more info: <http://www.namethatplant.net/plantdetail.shtml?plant=600>



Climbing Aster (*Ampelaster carolinianus*) has a sprawling growth ideal for fence and trellis and can reach 10 feet or more. It is not drought tolerant and requires consistently moist soil with good drainage, but will tolerate seasonal flooding. Deadhead the flowers after blooming in late summer to early fall, but don't prune until early spring just as the plant shows signs of awakening. Frequent division is recommended to control rapid spread.

For more info: <https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/ampelaster-carolinianus/>



Climbing Hydrangea (*Hydrangea barbara*) is a deciduous, semi-evergreen woody vine attaching to structures with aerial rootlets to climb trees and trellises that can cover walls or buildings and even trained as an espalier. Because it needs to climb to produce flowers it is not a good ground cover. It likes partial sun and afternoon shade, rich and consistently moist to wet and slightly acidic soil. Prune after blooming to control growth and stimulate growth for the next season. The best propagation method is from softwood. High flammability, so keep away from occupied structures.

For more info: <https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/ampelaster-carolinianus/>



Coral Honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*) is a semi-evergreen vigorous twining vine that can reach 10 - 20 tall and 3-6 feet wide when grown with medium moisture in well-drained, organically rich soils in full sun. It flowers on new growth, so avoid pruning until after flowering. Avoid fertilizing, and propagate by layering, stem cutting or seed. It can grow on trees, trellis, arbor or structures or be left to sprawl as a ground cover. It flowers in mid-spring, and attracts butterflies, moths, and hummingbirds love it. It is salt tolerant but has some fire risk, so avoid planting near occupied structures.

For more info: <https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/lonicera-sempervirens/common-name/honeysuckle/>



Crossvine (*Bignonia capreolata*) is another hummingbird favorite; a vigorous semi-evergreen vine with trumpet-shaped flowers that climbs by tendrils on trees and structures, or spreads across the ground by suckers. It prefers rich and moist with average but well drained soil. The more sun the more blooms. Best propagation is by root cutting or seed. It blooms early in the year. It's another fire risk vine, so keep it away from the house, and keep an eye on suckers to control spread.

For more info: <https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/bignonia-capreolata/>



Virgins Bower (*Clematis virginiana*) is also known as ‘woodbine’ among other common names. It is a rapid grower reaching 15-20 feet high and 3-6 feet wide in rich, moist but well-drained soils. It blooms in full sun to part shade. Its blooms are showy and fragrant in the autumn and attract pollinators including hummingbirds. It is a dioecious plant with the female plant producing viable seed clusters (photo left). Prune anytime to shape and cut-back 8-12 inches in late fall or early spring. Propagate by layering, seed, or stem cutting. Fairly tolerant of deer and rabbits. Can become weedy if not pruned annually.

For more info: <https://virginiawildflowers.org/2015/08/01/virgins-bower/>



Virginia Creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*) is a deciduous, woody vine, a vigorous tendril-climber that can reach 30-50 feet vertically or horizontally by adhering to smooth surfaces by sucker-disc tendrils. It grows well in average if well-drained with medium moisture. It is tolerant of full shade but gives good fall color in sunny locations. Easy to grow, it needs to be trimmed regularly to control as it can ruin painted surfaces and is difficult to remove from structures. It has an extreme flammability rating so keep away from the house.

For more info: <https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/parthenocissus-quinquefolia/>



American Wisteria (*Wisteria frutescens*) is a deciduous woody vine that grows counterclockwise twining around structures to 40 feet or more, preferring moist understory habitats with dappled shade. American wisteria is not as aggressive a spreader as the Chinese species (*W. sinensis*) or Japanese (*W. floribunda*). *Once established, it will produce beautiful and fragrant blooms in 2-3 years. Prune regularly to shape and direct growth, but save heavy pruning for the spring immediately after flowering and adding compost to the soil. Propagate by shoots and cuttings.*

For more info: <https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/wisteria-frutescens/>

Compiled by Doug Lockard July 2022.

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The following table summarizes some of the more important characteristics of each of the above vine species:

SCNPS GUIDE TO NATIVE CLIMBING & GROUND COVER VINES															
COMMON NAME	TYPE	ZONE	SIZE (FT)		SUN				MOIST	SOIL	BLOOMS		BENEFITS		
			D/EG	High	Wide	Fsu	Psu	PSh			FSh	Color	When	Deer	Wild
Passion Flower, Yellow	D	5 -8a	10	3	Y	Y	Y		Med WD	Org	Yellow	Jun-Sept	Y	Bf/Hb	Y
Passion Flower, Purple	D	5 to 9	6	6	Y	Y	Y		Med WD	Org	Purple	Jul-Sept	Y	Hb	
Carolina Jessamine	EG	6a-10a	15	5	Y	Y	ok		Moist-Med	Org	Yellow	Feb-Apr	Y	Be/Hb/Bf	Bees
Climbing Aster	SEG	6b-9a	10	4	Y	Y	Y		Moist-Med	Tolerant	Lav	Aug			
Climbing Hydrangea	D	6b-8a	20	18	Y	Y	Y	ok	Moist	Org	White	May-Jun	Y	Be/Bf/Bi	
Coral Honeysuckle	SEG	4a-9a	15	4	Y				Med WD	Org	Red/Or	May-Jun		Bi/Hb/Bf/Be	
Crossvine	SEG	5b-9a	40	8	Y	Y	ok	ok	Med WD	Tolerant	Coral	May-Jun		Hb	
Virgins Bower	D	6b-8a	15	2.5	Y	Y	Y		Moist-Med	Org	White	July		Be/Bf/Bi	Y
Virginia Creeper	D	3a-10b	40	8	Y	Y	Y		Med WD	Tolerant	White	May-Jul	Y	Bi	
American Wisteria	D	5a-9a	40	6	Y	Y	Y		Moist WD	Org/Acid	Pur/Lav	Mar-Jul	Y	Be/Bf	Y

Table of Abbreviations:

Type: 'D' is deciduous, 'EG' is evergreen, and 'SEG' is semi-evergreen in portions of SC

Sun: 'Fsu' is full sun, 'Psu' is part sun, 'Psh' is part shade, and 'Fsh' is full shade. 'ok' means tolerant, but with fewer blooms

Moist: 'Med' is average, about 1" per week & allowed to dry between waterings, 'Moist' is consistently moist, and 'WD' is well drained soil

Soil: 'Org' means rich with organics, 'Tolerant' means fairly tolerant of most soil conditions,

Deer: Means deer tolerant; they don't like to eat it

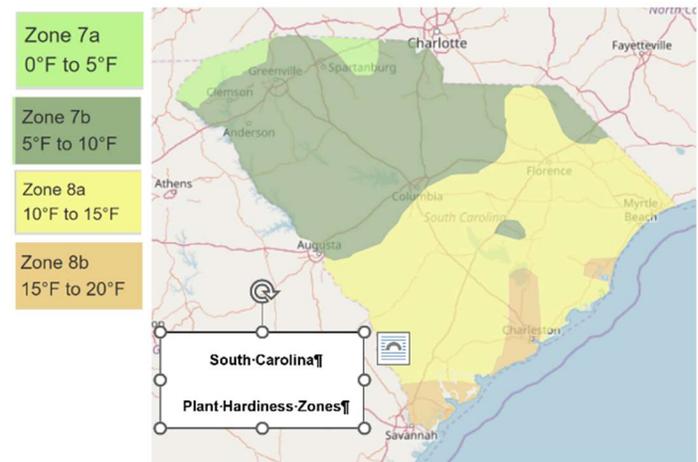
Wild: 'Be' is native bee, 'Bf' is butterfly and/or moths, 'Bi' is bird, 'Hb' is hummingbird

Host: 'Y' indicates the plant is host to one or more species; usually butterflies

PHOTO-CREDITS¶

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- ¶
- → Purple Passionflower, compliments of Wikipedia¶
- → Yellow Passionflower, compliments of Richard & Teresa Ware*¶
- → Carolina Jessamine, compliments of Patrick McMillan*¶
- → Climbing Aster, compliments of J.K.(Janie) Marlow*¶
- → Climbing Hydrangea, compliments of J.K.(Janie) Marlow*¶
- → Coral Honeysuckle, compliments of Doug Lockard¶
- → Crossvine, compliments of Richard & Teresa Ware*¶
- → Virgins Bower, compliments of VirginiaWildflowers.com¶
- → Virginia Creeper, compliments of Google-RF¶
- → Wisteria, compliments of Miller-Putnam's back patio¶



<https://www.plantmaps.com/interactive-south-carolina-usda-plant-zone-hardiness-map.php>