

MESSENGER-INQUIRER



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Vines Add Interest to the Garden
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What plant type adds interest to the garden vertically besides trees? Vining plants and their flowers provide additional design options for the landscape when used as a privacy screen and background for other plants.

Use a trellis structure when placing climbing vines near a building. This allows for good air circulation around the vine and the building. The trellis structure can be made of wire mesh that is anchored to the ground and attached to the building by hooks. The wire can be slipped off the hooks and pulled away to maintain the building.

Cardinal climber vine (*Ipomoea x multifida*) is a vigorous annual vine reaching 15 to 20 feet. To climb, it twists itself around the structure. The 1-inch, brilliant red flowers are produced on the plant from early summer to frost. The tubular-shaped blossoms and color make it a hummingbird's delight. The green leaves are finely divided giving it a light, airy look. This one can be started from seed. Cardinal climber vine prefers to grow in moist, well-drained soil

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and full sun. It is suited to growing in pots with a trellis in the pot or nearby, or planted in the soil near a trellis.

Purple hyacinth bean (*Lablab purpureus*) is an annual vine that grows 10 to 20 feet tall. The pea-type flowers are purple and fragrant. They begin to appear in early summer. The blossoms give way to colorful magenta bean pods, adding interest to the plant. This vigorous vine can be seeded outdoors or started inside and transplanted into the garden in full sun.

The moon vine (*Ipomoea alba*) is treated like an annual in this area because it is killed by freezing temperatures. Plant it where the 5- to 6-inch white trumpet-like flowers are viewed in the evening, since the flowers begin to open in the evening and last for one night. Every evening, through the sliding glass doors at my parents' home in the summer, we love to watch how many new flowers open on this plant. The heart-shaped, green leaves are 4 to 6 inches long. It prefers full sun and well-drained soil.

Cross vine (*Bignonia capreolata*) is a native perennial plant of Kentucky. The orange-red, 2-inch-long, trumpet-shaped flowers are showy and attract hummingbirds. It blooms in the spring. The unique leaves are compound, consisting of two narrow leaflets 2.5 to 5 inches long and a tendril. The tendril ends in a disk that adheres to whatever it is climbing up. It can reach 35 to 50 feet in height or length and spreads 6 to 9 feet wide. The fruit pod, which follows the flower, is about 7 inches long and hangs on the plant into the fall. It grows in the shade but produces more flowers in full sun.

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Clematis hybrids (*Clematis*), which are perennial, provide blooms from June through September, depending on the cultivar. The best-known clematis are the hybrids, which have a variety of cultivars with different flower colors, including Nelly Moser, pink flower with dark pink stripes; Henryi, white flowers; Ernest Markham, magenta flowers; General Sikorski, lavender flowers; and Duchess of Edinburgh, double white flowers. The size of the flower ranges from 4 to 7 inches across. Some bloom in spring and will bloom again in early fall. The plants grow from 6 to 12 feet long. The unusual seed pod continues to add interest to the plant after the flower fades.

Clematis prefers a well-drained, moist soil. The vine needs full sun, but the roots prefer to be cool. Keep the roots cool by placing mulch on top of them and by shading the roots with other plants.

Clematis needs initial training to grow on structures. It climbs by twining around the object. As it grows, place the vine on the structure to climb, otherwise, it will stay on the ground.

Trumpet honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*) is a perennial vine that prefers full sun but tolerates partial shade. The red, trumpet-shaped flower attracts hummingbirds. The flowers bloom from June through August. This vine grows 10 to 20 feet long.

Goldflame honeysuckle (*Lonicera x heckrottii*) has flowers that are carmine in color while in the bud stage. As it opens, the inside of the flower is yellow, and the outside gradually turns to a pink color. Its growth habit is similar to the trumpet honeysuckle, and it is a perennial.

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Eastern yellow passionflower (*Passiflora lutea*) has delicate looking 1-inch wide, pale greenish-yellow flowers. After the flowers are finished, small black berries appear, which birds like to feed on. The leaves are 3-lobed. The vines can grow over 20 feet long. It prefers to grow in fertile, moist but well-drained soil. It grows in part shade to full sun.

Vines which are aggressive, non-native, and take over the habitat that should be avoided include: porcelain berry (*Ampelopsis brevipedunculata*); sweet autumn clematis (*Clematis terniflora*); Asian bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculate*); Wintercreeper (*Euonymus fortune*); Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*); and periwinkle (*Vinca minor*). This list is from a publication on Kentucky's Native Alternatives to Invasive Plants from the KY Exotic Pest Plant Council.

For more information about climbing vines, contact the Daviess County Cooperative Extension Service at 270-685-8480 or annette.heisdorffer@uky.edu.

Annette's Tip:

Crayfish chimneys in lawns and gardens are associated with a high water table or heavy, low-lying soils. Draining and tiling to reduce soil moisture may help. There are no pesticides registered for crayfish control because of contamination of groundwater.

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