



Cooperative Extension Service
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*¹

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Introduction

One of the most attractive deciduous vines, Virginia Creeper provides deep green cover to most any object, rapidly climbing by means of tendrils and adhesive disks (Fig. 1). The palmately divided leaflets turn a beautiful scarlet color in fall and the bluish-black berries, usually hidden by foliage, are quite attractive to birds. The seeds germinate readily in the landscape and the plant often becomes weedy.

General Information

Scientific name: *Parthenocissus quinquefolia*

Pronunciation: parth-en-no-SIS-us kwin-kweff-FOLE-lee-uh

Common name(s): Virginia Creeper

Family: *Vitaceae*

Plant type: ground cover

USDA hardiness zones: 3B through 10 (Fig. 2)

Planting month for zone 7: year round

Planting month for zone 8: year round

Planting month for zone 9: year round

Planting month for zone 10: year round

Origin: native to Florida

Uses: naturalizing

Availability: somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the plant

Description

Height: depends upon supporting structure

Spread: depends upon supporting structure

Plant habit: spreading

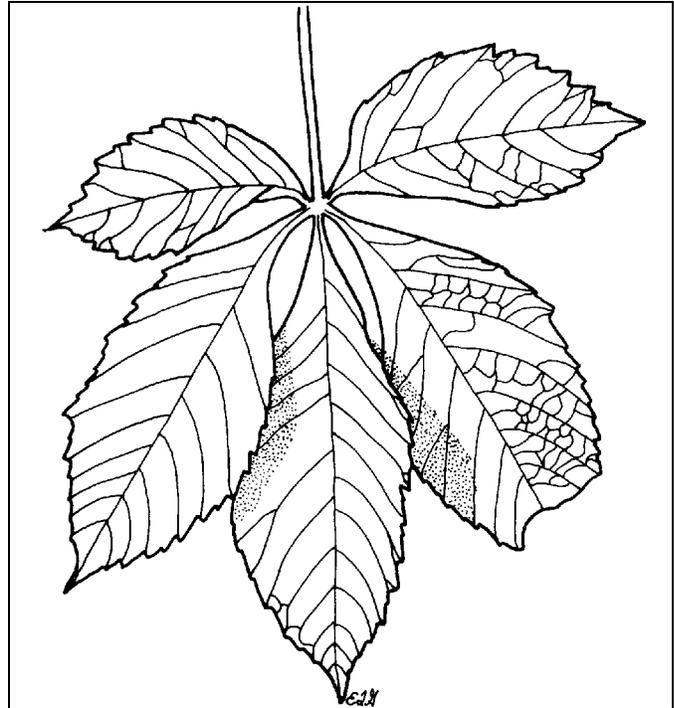


Figure 1. Virginia Creeper.

Plant density: moderate

Growth rate: fast

Texture: medium

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: alternate

Leaf type: palmately compound

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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Leaf margin: serrate
Leaf shape: obovate
Leaf venation: pinnate
Leaf type and persistence: deciduous
Leaf blade length: 4 to 8 inches
Leaf color: green
Fall color: red
Fall characteristic: showy

Flower

Flower color: green
Flower characteristic: spring flowering

Fruit

Fruit shape: round
Fruit length: less than .5 inch
Fruit cover: fleshy
Fruit color: purple
Fruit characteristic: persists on the plant

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: not applicable

Current year stem/twig color: brown
Current year stem/twig thickness: thin

Culture

Light requirement: plant grows in part shade/part sun; plant grows in the shade
Soil tolerances: acidic; clay; sand; occasionally wet; loam; slightly alkaline
Drought tolerance: high
Soil salt tolerances: unknown
Plant spacing: 36 to 60 inches

Other

Roots: not applicable
Winter interest: no special winter interest
Outstanding plant: not particularly outstanding
Invasive potential: native plant that often reproduces into nearby landscapes
Pest resistance: no serious pests are normally seen on the plant

Use and Management

Virginia Creeper can be espaliered against a wall and provides great visual appeal during winter when the leaves have fallen. Stems do not branch readily so a large number of plants need to be installed to create a dense effect. While ideal for use on buildings or trellises, Virginia Creeper should probably not be grown on wood siding. Its tendrils will work themselves between the boards and are difficult to remove. Also the dense foliage will dry out slowly after a rain, causing a variety of moisture problems for wood siding. It can be established as a ground cover but the deciduous habit makes it undesirable in the winter.

Growing in full sun to fairly deep shade, Virginia Creeper does best on fairly rich soil high in organic matter but will tolerate hot, dry locations.

The cultivar 'Engelmanni' has smaller leaves and denser growth, making it well-suited to small gardens.

Propagation is by seed.

Pests and Diseases

No pests or diseases are of major concern but Virginia Creeper is occasionally bothered by Japanese beetles.