

Climbing hydrangea

(*Hydrangea barbara*)

For definitions of botanical terms, visit en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glossary_of_botanical_terms.

Climbing hydrangea, also commonly known as Woodvamp or Cowitch vine, is endemic to the Southeastern United States, ranging from Virginia west to East Texas and south into Central Florida. It occurs naturally in moist forests and swamps. Its fragrant, showy white flowers bloom in spring and summer, attracting a variety of pollinators.

This woody, deciduous vine has glossy, dark green, ovate leaves that fade to a creamy tan in the fall. They are oppositely arranged and cover the plant from top to bottom. Numerous white flowers occur in terminal umbels, produced only on new climbing wood. Individual flowers are small with many protruding stamens. Seeds are born in dehiscent, urn-shaped capsules.

This species was previously known as *Decumaria barbara* and may still be referenced as such in online and print resources.

Family: Hydrangeaceae (Hydrangea family)

Native range: North Florida into the central peninsula to Hillsborough, Polk and Osceola counties

To see where natural populations of Climbing hydrangea have been vouchered, visit www.florida.plantatlas.usf.edu.

Lifespan: Perennial

Soil: Moist to wet sandy or loamy soils high in organic matter

Exposure: Part to full shade

Growth habit: Climbing up to 30' or trailing groundcover

Propagation: Softwood cuttings

Florida regions of landscape suitability: North, Central

Garden tips: Climbing hydrangea is great for a shady area, whether climbing in trees or on a trellis. It can also be used as a groundcover, but it will not flower in this habit.

Climbing hydrangea is occasionally available from nurseries that specialize in Florida native plants. Visit www.PlantRealFlorida.org to find a nursery in your area.



Photo by Eleanor Dietrich

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