

LANDSCAPE VINES FOR SOUTHERN ARIZONA

Peter L. Warren

The reasons for using vines in the landscape are many and varied. First of all, southern Arizona's bright sunshine and warm temperatures make them a practical means of climate control. Climbing over an arbor, vines give quick shade for patios and other outdoor living spaces. Planted beside a house wall or window, vines offer a curtain of greenery, keeping temperatures cooler inside. In exposed situations vines provide wind protection and reduce dust, sun glare, and reflected heat.

Vines add a vertical dimension to the desert landscape that is difficult to achieve with any other kind of plant. Vines can serve as a narrow space divider, a barrier, or a privacy screen. Some vines also make good ground covers for steep banks, driveway cuts, and planting beds too narrow for shrubs.

As design elements, vines offer an exciting array of plant forms, textures and floral effects. They add a special touch of charm and grace when festooning walls, trellises, and garden light posts or trailing over a doorway or corner of the home. Vines serve all of these landscape purposes and yet require little ground space.

Before selecting a particular vine, determine your landscape needs. The type of structure to be covered and the climbing support offered will partially determine what type of vine to choose. Vines can be grouped into four categories based on the manner of climbing.

Twining Vines

These have stems that wrap themselves around any available support as they grow. Their coverage is totally dependent on the size and extent of the support.

Tendrill-climbing Vines

Such vines support themselves by wrapping tendrils, modified, slender, flexible side-shoots, around anything to which they can cling.

Both twining and tendrill-type vines are easily trained on fences, trellises, baffles, upright posts, wooden towers, pipes, and even wires fastened securely at both ends.

Both twining and tendrill-type vines will not grow on untextured wall surfaces lacking structural support needed for climbing. Support provided for these vines should be sturdy enough to bear the weight of the full-grown vine. A trellis can be used or, if an espaliered effect is desired, special masonry nails are available from nurseries and hardware stores. Wire can be stretched between the nails for more support. Vine stems should

be tied with plastic tape or plastic covered wire. For heavy vines, use galvanized wire run through a short section of garden hose to protect the stem.

If a vine is to be grown against a wall that may someday need painting or repairs, the vine should be trained on a hinged trellis. Secure the trellis at the top so that it can be detached and laid down and then tilted back into place after the work is completed. Leave a space of several inches between the trellis and the wall.

Self-climbing Vines – Masonry

Some vines attach themselves to rough surfaces such as brick, concrete, and stone by means of aerial rootlets or tendrils tipped with adhesive discs. Vines in this group should be planted close to the surface they are to climb. Once started, self-climbing vines seldom need additional support. It should be noted that part of these vine holdfasts will remain attached to the wall if you change your mind and remove the plant. A stiff brush may be needed to remove all traces of the vine completely.

Non-climbing Shrub Vines

A fourth group of sprawling shrub-vines produces long, pendulous branches with no specialized means of climbing; these vines simply clamber over any support offered. To climb, these vines must be trained and tied by the gardener. A few vines such as bougainvillea and certain climbing roses develop vigorous suckers that grow straight up into the air. These suckers eventually develop lateral branches overtime as they blow over into adjoining structures (trees or buildings) where they lodge and grow. Some non-climbing shrub vines have hooked thorns along the stem to facilitate their spread by holding them in place.

Cultural Practices

Before selecting a vine, first evaluate site conditions. What kind of soil do you have? How much sunlight will your vine receive? How will you irrigate your vine? Most vines grow best in deep, well-drained soil, which has been improved with organic matter. However, some desert-adapted vines prefer a sandier soil. When first set out, a new plant will need to be watered more often than when it is established. The City of Tucson recommends the following guidelines from the publication "Landscape Watering by the Numbers: A Guide for the Arizona Desert" (Park & Co. 2005).

Watering schedule for newly planted desert adapted plants:

Weeks 1 and 2 Water every 1-2 days in summer, every 3-4 days in fall through spring

Weeks 3 and 4 Water every 3-4 days in summer, every 6-7 days in fall through spring

Weeks 5 and 6 Water every 4-6 days in summer, every 7-10 days fall through spring

Weeks 7 and 8 Water every 7 days in summer, every 10-14 days fall through spring

Monitor your plants. Water needs may vary depending on weather and soil conditions.

Well-established desert ground covers and vines often do fine with annual rainfall. During times of less than average rainfall it is important to monitor plants and irrigate as needed to a depth of 12 to 18 inches. Typically for plants that require moderate irrigation this means every 7 to 10 days in the summer, 10 to 14 days in the spring and fall, and 14 to 21 days in the winter. For plants that need only occasional or low irrigation, it is fine to expand the scale to meet their needs. Likewise, plants that need high amounts of irrigation should follow a tighter schedule than normal in times of drought. Monitoring the plants, the depth of irrigation with a soil probe, and the weather is key to making adjustments that are effective and efficient.

Well-established plants that are not desert adapted may need watering more often. It is important to monitor your plants. In most garden soils, a deep soaking twice a week in the summer and once a week in the winter is adequate. Monitoring can be done with a soil probe to determine the depth of irrigation and how long the soil remains moist.

Fertilize vines just often enough to maintain vigor and good foliage color. An application of ammonium phosphate (16-20-0) or similar analysis fertilizer can be made once each year in late winter to maintain good growth. Be careful not to over-fertilize or over-water vines. Besides the possibility of plant injury, over-fertilizing or over-watering can discourage flowering. Vines that are sometimes shy to flower such as wisteria, bougainvillea, and cape honeysuckle, may flower if drought-stressed prior to the bloom period.

Using vines in the landscape represents a commitment to a certain amount of maintenance and pruning. Proper pruning is based on the growth and flowering habits of each vine species as well as the landscape effects desired. Many vines are more attractive if the branch tips are pinched back regularly to encourage compact growth. The vigorous types need regular pruning and shaping to look their best; if this is neglected, the tangled, undisciplined mass of vegetation that results can be quite difficult to manage. Even the masonry-climbing types of vines must be cut away from windows and kept out of eave troughs.

Vine Descriptions And Landscape Uses

In each vine description the basic information on the plant needs and limitations are listed along with a star designation "★" to indicate desert adapted low water use plants.

★ = desert adapted low water use plants

★ Arizona Grape Ivy (*Cissus trifoliata* var. *incisa*)



Height: 15-30 feet.

Method of Climbing: tendrils.

Hardiness: Sunset Zones 10-13.

Water use: low to medium.

Public Domain Photo

This is a slow-growing deciduous vine that can be an excellent sprawling groundcover and can be grown to climb on walls, a chain link fence, or trellises if given support. Plant it under a desert tree and let it climb to create an interesting lush effect. It will freeze to the ground at temperatures below 20 degrees F but will quickly recover. It can be planted in full sun to shade and requires little maintenance but should be pruned to control size if it becomes invasive. It spreads by underground tubers that can be poisonous and the foliage can cause a skin rash in some people.

★ Bougainvillea (*Bougainvillea* spp.)



Height: 15-50 feet.

Method of Climbing: non-climber.

Hardiness: Sunset Zones 12-21.

Water use: low.

Photo by Forest & Kim Starr

This fast growing, sprawling plant is commonly seen in the low desert. It is evergreen over mild winters when temperatures do not fall much below freezing. The stems may die back to near ground level when temperatures drop below 32 degrees F but established plants resume growth from the base. The large showy bracts surrounding the flowers provide masses of brilliant, glowing color from early summer through fall. Plant in spring after danger of frost has passed, being careful not to disturb the root ball. Plant this in full sun and with protection from wind for best results. The thorny stems produce neither tendrils nor holdfasts and need tying to support although the natural flow of the long branches begs to be set free. You can cut back fast-growing long shoots during summer to encourage flowering. Lush, vigorous plants that fail to bloom are probably over watered, over fertilized, or both. This is a spectacular accent or specimen vine for sunny south or west walls and may be used on banks or as a large viney shrub in mild areas. Shrubby types make excellent container plants.

★ **Baja Passion Vine (*Passiflora foetida*)**



Height: 10x10 feet.
 Method of climbing: tendrils.
 Hardiness: Sunset zones 12-24.
 Water use: low to medium.
 Photo by L. Shyamal

This rampant, herbaceous vine, with many intertwining shoots, climbs by means of tendrils. Cold-winter temperatures may damage it but it recovers quickly in summer. Death may result if temperatures fall to the mid-20s and the plant is not protected. Where temperatures remain higher than the mid-20s, plants can become invasive and spreading. Flowers are 3 to 4 inches in diameter, exotic and intricate, white or pinkish with central crown segments of blue and purple. Other species vary in color and form. The bloom period extends from early summer into fall. It grows well in full sun or part shade and requires deep, well-drained soil. Flower buds are likely to drop if the plant is over watered. You can support the vines on a sturdy trellis or fence. They are sometimes combined with other vines to create denser foliage mass for shade and privacy on open buildings such as carports.

★ = desert adapted low water use plants

Cape Honeysuckle (*Tecomaria capensis*)



Height: 5-10 feet.
 Method of Climbing: non-climber.
 Hardiness: Sunset Zones 9-24.
 Water use: medium.
 Photo by J.M.Garg

Evergreen shrubby vine; frost sensitive. Stout upright stems must be tied to a supporting structure to develop vine growth habit. Shiny, dark green foliage accents. Bright orange-red tubular flowers are borne in terminal clusters late summer to early winter. Will grow in full sun or part shade, but north or east exposure is essential in low desert areas. This plant is an African native and prefers irrigation in the cooler months. Good soil drainage is also essential. This plant can be used as a colorful, exotic specimen or accent plant on trellis or wall. It is also attractive as a container plant or shrub, growing quite large in mild areas.

Carolina Jasmine (*Gelsemium sempervirens*)



Height: 10-15 feet.
 Method of Climbing: twining stems.
 Hardiness: Sunset Zones 8-24.
 Water use: medium.
 Photo by H. Zell

Evergreen vine bears fragrant, tubular yellow flowers in late winter. Glossy light-green foliage is attractive but susceptible to chlorosis. Afternoon shade is best below 2,000 feet. Train to spill over a trellis, wall or fence in part shade for accent or screening use. Vine can get top heavy and should be invigorated by pruning 1/3 of the canopy every year or by coppicing every few years. Carolina Jasmine is especially attractive as a garland-type vine, producing a much-appreciated floral display during a season when there is little color. All parts of the plant are poisonous.

★ **Cat's Claw Vine (*Macfadyena unguis-cati*)**
(**Synonym: *Bignonia tweediana***)



Height: 30x30 feet
Method of climbing: tendrils and twining leaves.
Hardiness: Sunset Zones 8-24.
Water use: low.
Photo by L.G.Lohmann

Fine textured, fast growing, partly deciduous vine that loses all its leaves when winters are cold. Thrives in hot, sunny locations, but does best with east or north exposure at lowest elevations. Long lender stems can attach themselves to nearly any surface with hooked, claw-like, forked tendrils. Does not do well in sandy soil. Yellow 2-inch trumpet-shaped flowers make a bright splash of color in spring. Foliage provides dense cover in a short time. A vine of unusual merit for its ability to cover large vertical surfaces, shade arbors, screen fences and soften patio walls. Not particularly good for wire fences. Note: This vine is very aggressive and should not be planted where it can out-compete other plants or cause damage to adjacent structures

Clematis (*Clematis* sp.)



Height: 10-15 feet.
Method of climbing: tendrils and twining leaves.
Hardiness: Sunset Zones 4-9, 12-24, depending on species.
Water use: medium to high.
Photo by Ulf Eliasson

Graceful deciduous vine that produces large showy flowers in a wide range of colors in spring or summer, depending on type. Grows in part shade or full sun, but intense sunlight bleaches the flowers of some kinds. Plant in fertile, well drained soil and water regularly. Mulch to shade and cool the root zone soil. Not well adapted to low desert conditions. Can be trained to drape over a garden fence, wall or climb a trellis or garden light post.

Common Trumpet Creeper (*Campsis radicans*)
(**Synonym: *Bignonia radicans***)



Height: 20x20 feet.
Method of climbing: aerial rootlets.

★ = desert adapted low water use plants

Hardiness: Sunset Zones 1-21.

Water use: medium to high.

Photo by Ciell

This is a semi-hardy, deciduous vine with many stout woody stems. Temperatures below freezing may cause this plant to die back to the ground, but new stems grow back quickly. It tends to produce rank, terminal growth causing older plants to become bare at the base. Eventually it develops heavier wood that the weak aerial rootlets cannot support, making it necessary to prune back and tie the branches to strong support. Spectacular clusters of orange-red flowers appear throughout summer and are very attractive to hummingbirds. Three to five inch brown cigar shaped seed pods follow blooms. A tough, vigorous vine that grows best in full sun. More compact growth results if stem tips are pinched back. It is most effective when allowed to ramble over an arbor or sturdy trellis and can spread in garden through suckering roots

Creeping Fig (*Ficus pumila*)



Height: 30-40 feet.

Method of climbing: aerial rootlets.

Hardiness: Sunset Zones 8-24.

Water use: medium.

Photo by Ixitixel

This is a high climbing evergreen vine, which forms a dense cover of dark green foliage. It attaches itself tightly to masonry or almost any other surface. Young plants bear dainty heart shaped leaves and often grow slowly at first. As the vine matures, juvenile foliage is replaced by 2 to 4 inch oblong leathery leaves. It is most useful for covering tall structures or other large wall surfaces. To maintain the delicate juvenile growth, prune out mature foliage as it appears or cut the plant back severely every few years. It is somewhat salt sensitive. Deeply water using the basin irrigation method and avoid placing within 40 feet of water features to avoid structural damage from plant roots.

Crossvine “Tangerine Beauty” (*Bignonia capreolata*)



Height: 20-30 feet.

Method of climbing: self-climbing vine.

Hardiness zone: Sunset Zones 4-9, 14-24.

Water use: medium.

Photo by Stan Shebs

This is a vigorous, fast growing woody vine that climbs by branched tendrils with adhesive disks. It has evergreen foliage, which turns reddish-purple in fall with subsequent leaf drop in the colder winter areas of its range. In severe winters, stems may die to the ground but roots will sprout new growth the following spring). It is primarily grown for its attractive tangerine flowers and its ability to rapidly cover structures with attractive foliage. Easily grown in average, well-drained soils in full sun to part shade, it tolerates full shade, but best flower production occurs in sun. Prune after flowering if needed. A cross section of stem reveals a marking resembling the Greek cross, hence the common name.

★ Desert Snapdragon Vine (*Maurandella antirrhiniflora*)



Height: 3x3 feet.

Method of climbing: tendrils.

Hardiness zone: Sunset Zone 12.

Water use: low to medium.

Photo: © 1998 ASDM

★ = desert adapted low water use plants

This vine, not a true snapdragon, is charming, attractive and well worth cultivating as a small, dense, herbaceous vine or as a groundcover with each plant covering about a 3-foot square area. It is also suitable for small trellises and gates or for trailing down from a hanging basket. It should be planted in well-drained soil and prefers some shade. It can be grown from seed and will produce small, semi-hardy scrambling vines that die back to the ground each winter if temperatures drop to the mid 20s. The small rose-purple flowers, produced in abundance, resemble what most people think of as garden snapdragon.

Grape (*Vitis spp.*)



Height: 20-30 feet.
 Method of climbing: tendrils.
 Hardiness: Sunset Zones 1-22.
 Water use: medium.
 Public Domain Photo

This is a fast growing, deciduous plant with bold, lobed leaves and familiar sweet, edible fruit. The yield is regulated mostly by pruning practices. It is a hardy vine adapted to full sun or part shade. Insect pests may require control measures nearly every growing season. An arbor, trellis or fence makes a suitable support if sturdy and durable.

★ Hacienda Creeper (*Parthenocissus sp.*)



★ = desert adapted low water use plants

Height: 8-12 feet.
 Method of climbing: tendrils.
 Hardiness: Sunset Zones 10-12.
 Water use: low to medium.
 Photo: P. L. Warren

This plant strongly resembles the related Virginia creeper [*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*] but has smaller leaves, is slower growing, and is evergreen in mild climates. The bright green palmate leaves are quite attractive and in areas that do not experience sharp frosts or drop down into the low 20's F will turn a reddish color in fall and retain its foliage until it is replaced by flushes of new bright green leaves in spring. It does best with some protection from the hot afternoon sun in summer. Self-attaching to vertical surfaces with adhesive-tipped tendrils, this plant clings to fences or other structures, making it a great screening plant but it can also be used as a groundcover. It is best to plant it in full sun to part shade and it tolerates poor soils and some drought.

★ Hall's Honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica 'Halliana'*)



Height: 10-12 feet.
 Method of climbing: twining stems.
 Hardiness zone: Sunset Zones 10-12.
 Water use: low to medium.
 Photo by Wouter Hagens

This is a dense evergreen vine with many twining stems. Its tubular flowers are slightly fragrant, first white, changing to pale yellow, and appearing in late spring and early summer. It is very hardy and grows in sun or shade. It develops a heavy foliage mass and should be pruned severely to keep the plant in bounds. A very serviceable screening vine when trained on a fence, it is attractive on a trellis or garden light post or trailing over a patio wall and can be used as a bank or ground cover.

Lady Bank's Rose (*Rosa banksiae*)



Height: 10-20 feet.
Method of climbing: non-climbing.
Hardiness zone: Sunset Zones 10-12.
Water use: medium.
Photo by Midori

This tall-growing almost-evergreen rose has long slender stems which can be fastened to a wall, trellis or fence to develop a vine-like habit of growth. Clusters of white or pale yellow very double 1 to 1 ½ inch flowers cover the branches in profusion each spring. The white form is more nearly evergreen. Both types are adapted to full sun or part shade, and both are resistant to mildew and aphids. Give it afternoon shade and regular applications of iron chelate at low elevations. The dark glossy foliage is attractive when trained on a masonry wall for tailored effect. This rose will also quickly cover large banks of 20 feet or more.

★ Lilac Vine (*Hardenbergia violacea*)



Height: 12-16 feet.
Method of climbing: twining.
Hardiness: Sunset Zone 12.
Water use: low.
Photo by KENPEI

This evergreen vine climbs by twining stems to 12-16 feet. It is hardy to around 23 degrees F and short duration dips to slightly lower; expect severe damage if temperatures drop below 20 F. Simple, oblong (2-4 inches) leaves clothe these stems and pinkish purple flowers with a chartreuse spot in the center cascade like small Wisteria blossoms in the winter to early spring. It does best planted in sun or light shade in hot areas. It tolerates and even prefers heavy soil so long as it drains well. It requires little water once established. It responds well to pruning and hard pruning can reinvigorate older plants.

★ Mexican Flame Vine (*Senecio confusus*)



Height: 8 – 10 feet.
Method of climbing: twining.
Hardiness: Sunset Zone 12.
Water use: low.
Photo by P. L. Warren

This fast growing, drought tolerant evergreen vine works well in any type of soil and it prefers full sun or partial shade. It has orange-red flowers that grow in clusters. It works well on fences, trellises, mailboxes, porch railings, and can be worked in and out of chain link fences to get a lovely effect. It can be planted to grow up trees and create a nice appearance or it can be allowed to become a tangled mass for a shrub-like effect. It is resistant to pests and diseases and it will attract butterflies.

★ = desert adapted low water use plants

Pink Trumpet Vine (*Podranea ricasoliana*)



Height: 20 feet.
Method of climbing: non-climbing
Hardiness: Sunset Zone 12
Water use: medium.
Photo by JFKCom

This is a fast growing and easy to cultivate vine. It does best in full sun, in nutrient-rich, well-drained soil and benefits greatly from regular applications of well-rotted compost and plenty of water in summer. An established plant is tolerant of heat, strong sunlight, wind and periods of drought. It will tolerate light frost, but it is better suited to frost-free gardens. Young plants require protection from frost. It can get out of control so consider the mature size before planting and will need pruning to be kept neat. Pruning will also improve flowering and the best time for pruning is in winter or early spring just before new growth commences. This is an excellent plant for arbors, pergolas and carports and is a valuable shade-giving plant in a hot climate. It is ideal for an informal hedge or planted against a wall or a fence to create a screen. Because it does not have tendrils the long branches must be tied to a support.

Potato Vine (*Solanum jasminoides*)



Height 20-30 feet.
Method of climbing: twining stems
Hardiness zone: Sunset Zones 10-12
Water use: medium to high.
Public Domain Photo

This delicate evergreen vine, drops its foliage when subjected to sub-freezing temperatures for any length of time but the plant is hardy to 20 degrees F. Its clusters of dainty 1-inch star shaped flowers are white with conspicuous bright yellow stamens at the center. The bloom period extends throughout spring and summer. It grows well in sun or part shade but needs wind protection. It looks best trained on a trellis and pruned each year in early spring. It is planted chiefly for flower effects but is also used as a screen or overhead canopy in garden areas where the loss of foliage in cold winter would not be objectionable.

Primrose Jasmine (*Jasminum mesnyi*)



Height: 5-10 feet.
Method of climbing: non-climber.
Hardiness: Sunset Zone 12.
Water use: medium.
Public Domain Photo

This sprawling evergreen shrub has slender arching branches 5 to 10 feet long and bright yellow double flowers 1 to 2 inches across in mid to late winter. It develops a vine-like growth habit when branches are tied to a trellis and allowed to trail down. It makes an attractive mounding foundation plant three feet high if cut back once a year. It can also be clipped into a formal hedge without diminishing early spring blooms. It grows best in full sun or part shade and is an interesting specimen plant with graceful cascading growth habit and early flower display.

★ = desert adapted low water use plants

★ **Queen's Wreath, Rosa de Montana, Coral Vine, Confederate Vine (*Antigonon leptopus*)**



Height: 20x20 feet.
Method of climbing: tendrils.
Hardiness zone: Sunset Zone 12.
Water use: low to medium.
Photo by J.M.Garg

This is a fast growing, more-or-less perennial vine. It usually dies back in winter with below freezing temperatures but recovers quickly in the spring. Bright green heart-shaped leaves form dense mass of foliage and open, trailing sprays of rose, pink or white flowers provide a dazzling color display in late summer and early fall. It revels in full sun and high heat. Though it may not die back in mild areas, it is generally renewed each year by cutting back to ground level in late winter. In rich moist soil, the plant may be lush and vigorous but flower sparingly. It can be grown on an arbor, fence, trellis, or garden wall for shade, screening or late-summer floral display. This plant can be very aggressive and should be planted where it will not overrun other plants.

Silverlace Vine (*Plygonum auberti*)



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Height: 15-25 feet.
Method of climbing: twining stems.
Hardiness zone: Sunset Zone 10-12.
Water use: medium
Photo by Jan Samanek

This is a deciduous twining vine with sparse grayish foliage but great billowing masses of delicate white flowers in summer and fall. It is hardy and fast growing in full sun and essentially pest free. It can be pruned each year in late winter. It is useful as a screen, cascade, or accent vine on a fence, trellis, or wall. It does not perform well when subjected to the heat and dry winds of low elevation climate.

Snail Vine (*Vigna Caracalla*)



Height: 15-20 feet.
Method of climbing: tendrils.
Hardiness: Sunset Zone 12.
Water use: high.
Photo by teclasorg

This is a vigorous, semi-perennial, twining plant that may die back to the ground during the winter. If frost kills top growth, it can be cut back in early spring to rejuvenate growth. This plant bounces back in the spring and grows quickly, reaching 30 feet in a year. It makes an excellent screen trained on wire fences, trellises, and block walls. Masses of snail shape, lavender flowers bloom throughout the year.

**Star Jasmine (*Trachelospermum jasminoides*)
(Synonym: *Rhynchospermum jasminoides*)**



Height: 10-15 feet.
Method of climbing: twining stems.
Hardiness: Sunset Zones 8-24.
Water use: medium to high.
Photo by Scott Zona

This is a beautiful evergreen vine with thick, leathery, dark green leaves and fragrant clusters of white, star shaped flowers in great profusion each spring. Part shade is best but it will tolerate more sun if planted in deep, well-prepared soil and watered generously. East or north exposure is desirable in low desert areas. It can be used as an elegant specimen, accent or screening vine near a patio or house where the sweet fragrance can be enjoyed to the fullest. It is also effective spilling over a planter wall or billowing up a post. It is sometimes used as a loose, sprawling ground cover that gets 12-18 inches tall and it does well in containers.

Violet Orchid Vine (Mascagnia lilacina)



Height: 10-20 feet.
Method of climbing: twining.
Hardiness: Sunset Zones 12-28.
Water use: medium.
Photo by P. L. Warren

This is a medium-sized semi-deciduous woody evergreen vine with lilac-colored flowers. It is about the same size and habit as yellow orchid vine (see below), but is cold-hardy into the mid teens. The fruits are multi-winged and individual segments look like butterflies. It should be grown in a well-drained soil in full sun to part shade. The small lavender flowers will usually cluster at the top of the trellis. There are small hairs on the foliage that can cause irritation.

Yellow Orchid Vine (Mascagnia macroptera)



Height: 10-20 feet.
Method of climbing: twining.
Hardiness: Sunset Zones 12-28.
Water use: medium.
Photo by T. Moore

This is a medium-sized woody evergreen vine with clusters of yellow flowers and a moderate growth rate. Fruits are multi-winged and individual segments look like butterflies. Although it produces a lot of the winged fruits, the seeds are not viable. Give it a well-drained soil in full sun since it is drought tolerant.

★ *Violet Trumpet Vine (Mascagnia lilacina)*



Height: 10-20 feet.
Method of climbing: tendrils.
Hardiness: Sunset Zones 9, 12-28.
Water use: low to medium.
Photo by P. L. Warren

★ = desert adapted low water use plants

This evergreen vine has an interesting leaf structure; two leaves and one tendril emerge from each leaf bud. It has trumpet-shaped lavender flowers with purple veins in heavy bloom in mid to late spring and then off and on in late spring through the fall. Plant this in well-drained soil with full sun to part shade and adequate support. It tends to have leaves, flowers and growth only at the top and is fast growing once established.

★ **Yucca Vine aka Yellow Morning Glory Vine**
(*Merremia aurea*)



Height: 20-30 feet.
Method of climbing: twining.
Hardiness: Sunset Zones 12-24.
Water use: low.
Photo: © 1998 ASDM

This is a fast growing, frost sensitive vine that may die back to the ground below 32 degrees F but regrow from underground tubers if the top is destroyed. It is very drought tolerant but will grow more rapidly with supplemental water when good drainage is provided. This plant has deep green palmate leaves and bright yellow, morning glory flowers that bloom throughout the warm months.

Annual Vines

Annual vines grow rapidly from seed and may be used in the landscape to make a quick screen on a fence, a wall tracery, a colorful container plant, or a decorative accent for a lamp post. Since annual vines complete their life cycle in a single growing season, annual vines seldom need more than a light trellis or stout twine for support.

Some annual vines grown in southern Arizona include Scarlet Runner Bean, ornamental gourds, Hyacinth Bean, Cup-and-Saucer Vine, Sweet Peas, Balloon Vine, Pear Balsam, Canary Bird Vine, and Black-eyed Susan Vine.

Adapted from

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