# Hydrangea anomala ssp. petiolaris - Climbing Hydrangea

(Hydrangeaceae)

Hydrangea anomala ssp. petiolaris is a slow-growing, clinging and twining vine. It has dense, glossy foliage that gives a three-dimensional attribute to walls, columns, or other supportive structures due to its lateral branches that extend horizontally for a few feet beyond the supportive structure. Climbing Hydrangea has creamy-white flat-topped inflorescences in summer are an added bonus.

# **FEATURES**

#### Form

- -primarily a large climbing vine; occasionally found as a slowly spreading groundcover, usually at the base of the existing vine, but sometimes planted specifically as a non-traditional groundcover -maturing at up to 50' high, but often much shorter either a twining and clinging vine growth habit, or an arching and mounding groundcover -initially a very slow growth rate, but becoming
- Culture
- -full sun to full shade

medium to rapid once established

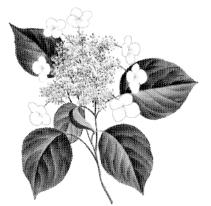
- -prefers moist, well-drained, rich, acidic soils in partial sun, but is somewhat adaptable to poor soils and neutral to slightly alkaline pH soils
- -propagated by seeds, rooted stem cuttings, or transplanting of stems that have self-rooted while lying prostrate on the ground
- -Hydrangea Family (some sources list it under *Saxifragaceae*), with few diseases or pests
- -commonly available in container form as a young staked vine
- -eventually needs some pruning to keep it restricted at its base if it is to be used exclusively as a vine -if chlorosis of the leaves occurs, a fertilization regimen will likely remedy the plant's nutritional balance, which is probably caused by alkaline soil pH

#### Foliage

- -medium to dark green and glossy on the leaf uppersides
- -alternate, broadly ovate, with an acuminate apex and cordate base
- -leaf blades are about 3" long, with 2" long petioles -autumn color is a poor yellowish green in Oct. and Nov.

# **Flowers**

-a white outer ring of showy sterile florets



- surrounds the creamy to green-yellow, central, fertile flowers
- -flat-topped 5" wide inflorescences flower in June and early July

#### Fruits

- -ornamentally insignificant brown capsules lie in a flat plane within the persistent outer ring of tan sterile floret remnants
- -not especially showy, but the entire flat-topped fruiting structure is persistent into the following season

## **Twigs**

- -young stout stems are a rich cinnamon color, exfoliating to show a light brown interior and having many aerial root holdfasts, while prominent buds are a shiny russet
- -the curving vertical stems are complemented by many horizontally held stout stems, which give a three-dimensional effect to the structure that supports the vine

#### Trunk

-exfoliating, light brown, and stoutly

#### **USAGE**

### **Function**

- -structural cover, primarily used with wooden posts, large trees, or stone walls
- -rarely used as a groundcover

# Texture

- -bold texture in foliage and when bare
- -open density in foliage and when bare

#### Assets

- -gives a three-dimensional effect to walls or posts due to its unique outstretched horizontal stems
- -showy creamy-white summer flowers
- -lustrous summer foliage
- -shade-tolerant clinging and climbing vine

#### Liabilities

- -very slow to establish
- -somewhat open and informal as a vine (but if bold three-dimensional depth is desired for a structural support, this is a true asset)

## Habitat

- -Zones 5 to 8
- -Native to Japan and China

# **SELECTIONS**

## Alternates

-perennial vines that may serve as a structural cover (Actinidia, Akebia quinata, Aristolochia durior, Campsis radicans, Clematis, Hedera helix, Wisteria sinensis, etc.)

## **Cultivars – Variants – Related species**

-the species form is essentially the only type that is commercially available