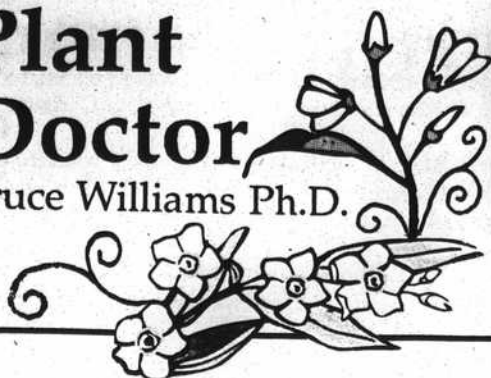


Plant Doctor

Bruce Williams Ph.D.



Sandy soils

Dr. Bruce Williams, Ph.D.
Brunswick County
Cooperative Extension Service

Dear Plant Doctor:

Our home is located on a sand dune several hundred yards from the ocean. An evergreen vine called smilax grows with its berries all over the dune. We would like to get more of this vine. Can it be planted? What nurseries carry this vine?

Answer: Most gardeners know smilax as greenbrier, catbrier or carrion-flower. I was first introduced to the many ornamental uses of this plant by gardeners in Fayetteville. There, gardeners train the vine to grow above and around the front door, forming a beautiful evergreen entry bower.

The genus Smilax is in the lily family and contains a dozen or more species of native evergreen or deciduous vines. Plant taxonomists must be feuding about what to call this plant because none of the three reference books I have agrees on what to call the species you mention.

I suspect you have *Smilax auriculata* (or *Smilax laurifolia*) growing on your sand dune. This plant is known by the very misleading common name of "wild bamboo".

Dr. Karl Graetz worked with this species in the early 1970s for use on dune establishment, conservation and beautification. He found that seeds of this species require two or more years for germination and must be scarified prior to planting. The black fruit containing the seed has been identified as an excellent wildlife food.

This plant is well-adapted to the sand dunes where it has adapted to salt spray and blowing sand. I find the dark-green foliage a welcome sight on the barren seacoast in the winter and believe this plant has great potential in coastal plains gardens. Inland species are very tolerant of adverse conditions, as well as being disease and insect resistant.

I expect you will have a difficult time finding a nursery that stocks this plant. I understand that the woody tuber of this plant can be transplanted during the winter months with pretty good success. If anyone knows of a nursery stocking this plant, please drop me a line.

Dear Plant Doctor:
I read your column every week and find it most informative. Hav-

ing recently moved to North Carolina from Long Island, N. Y., I am still trying to find the best plants to grow in my yard. I have had much success with vinca, impatiens and begonia but there must be others I can introduce to my yard. What annuals would you suggest? I also have three lovely hanging pots of lantana. What do I do with them in winter months?

Answer: Space will severely limit my answer but I will try to briefly list some of the plants you may want to try next year.

Dependable annuals or flowers planted as annuals in the coastal plains of North Carolina include the many forms of celosia (*Celosia sp.*) (cockscomb and Chinese woolflower), Cleome (*Cleome spinosa*), cosmos (*Cosmos bipinnatus*), blanket flower (*Gaillardia pulchella*), four o'clocks (*Mirabilis jalapa*), marigolds (*Tagetes sp.*), flowering tobacco (*Nicotiana glauca*), petunia (*Petunia hybrida*), portulaca (*Portulaca grandiflora*), scarlet sage (*Salvia splendens*) and the many strawflower types (eg. *Gomphrena* and *Helichrysum* species). In this column next spring I will list the best varieties of these plants as determined by N. C. State University field tests.

Remember to also utilize the many, many perennial flowering plants available to the eastern North Carolina gardener. The daylily (*Hemerocallis sp.*), hosta (*Hosta sp.*), astilbe (*Astilbe sp.*), coreopsis (*Coreopsis sp.*), moss phlox (*Phlox subulata*), and obedient plant (*Plyostegia virginiana*) are just a few of the dozens of species that make wonderful flowering garden additions.

Your lantana should overwinter in the garage or basement just fine. Just keep the soil slightly moist (on the dry side) and do not allow it to freeze. Move outside in March or April.

Join an arboretum, botanical garden or master gardeners group and get involved with their horticultural programs to really find out about some of the garden "gems" to be found in the coastal Carolinas.

Send your gardening questions or comments to The Plant Doctor, P. O. Box 109, Bolivia, NC 28422.

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Museum receives 'challenge' grant

The Southport Maritime Museum has received a \$7,500 challenge grant from the Kathleen Price and Joseph M. Bryan Family Foundation of Greensboro.

In order to receive the grant Southport Maritime Museum, Inc., must raise an additional \$7,500 in new pledges by June 1, 1993. When paid, the grant will be used to

renovate the museum's warehouse building space for use as a research library, educational classroom and controlled artifacts storage facility.

Mary Strickland, director, said, "We are delighted to receive this generous vote of confidence from the Kathleen Price and Joseph M. Bryan Family Foundation. The museum's board of directors and ad-

visory board recognize our emerging responsibility to preserve and display the artifacts of the Lower Cape Fear region's maritime heritage, while promoting future local opportunities in maritime-related industries, such as aquaculture.

"This grant serves to remind us of the needs of our community, our opportunity to communicate with our

youth about their past and future, and the desire of others to join hands in that effort."

The Southport Maritime Museum also provides educational programs to students in a five-county area free of charge.

For more information or to make a contribution to help meet the challenge, persons should contact the Southport Maritime Museum at 919-457-0003.

The Kathleen Price and Joseph M. Bryan Family Foundation provides support across North Carolina for non-profit initiatives in arts, education, health, human service and public interest fields.



Jeff Batchelor, retail sales manager at Lowe's, presents Judy Collins of Boiling Spring Lakes with the microwave oven she won as the grand prize in *The State Port Pilot's* second annual Christmas cookie contest. Mrs. Collins' recipe for her award-

winning "Mary Ann's Holiday Cookies" will appear, along with the other top winners and the finalists, in the Holiday Gift Guide to be published as a supplement to the November 24 edition of *The State Port Pilot*.

Hospital classes in diabetes education

The fall session of the diabetes education classes at The Brunswick Hospital will begin on Monday, November 23.

The program is designed to educate diabetics about proper nutrition, exercise, eye care, foot care, stress and complications associated with the disease.

The classes are free of charge and open to all diabetics, as well as family members involved in their care. Registered nurses from The Brunswick Hospital will be instructors.

Program participants will be invited to join the diabetes support group which meets at 7 p.m. the first Monday of each month in The Brunswick Hospital's conference room.

More information or reservations can be obtained by calling Sherry Henriksen or Patricia Nutter at 754-8121.

Old Newspapers



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