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Bignonia capreolata

[Synonyms : *Anisostichus capreolata*, *Anisostichus crucigera*, *Bignonia crucigera*, *Campsis capreolata*, *Doxantha capreolata*, *Tecoma crucigera*]

CROSS VINE is an evergreen, climbing vine. Native to south-eastern North America it has scented, paler inside, orange-red to yellow flowers.

It is also known as Coral vine, Quarter vine, Trumpet creeper, and Trumpet flower.

Warning – all parts of cross vine are said to be poisonous.

Capreolata means ‘bearing tendrils’.

For several North American Indian tribes, including the Cree, the vine provided medicine. The Choctaw tribe used a bark decoction to treat fluid retention – a remedy that was also used by the Koasati to ease headaches. The latter employed a leaf decoction for easing rheumatism, while a leaf infusion was preferred by the Cherokee for some blood disorders. The Houma tribe employed a root gargle in remedies for diphtheria.

Herbalists have also used the roots locally as an alternative to sarsaparilla (*Smilax aristolochiaefolia*).

Cross vine climbs by its tendrils and these attracted the attention of the noted English naturalist, Charles Darwin (1809-1882). After various experiments he showed not only that the plant instinctively seeks shade to gain a foothold (in its natural habitat darkness would be likely to indicate the presence of a tree) but also that it luxuriates on trees coated with moss or lichen (common in its natural surroundings).