

*Parthenocissus henryana*

[Synonyms : *Ampelopsis henryana*, *Cissus henryana*, *Parthenocissus henryi*, *Vitis henryana*]

**VARIEGATED VIRGIN-VINE** is a deciduous climbing shrub or vine. Native to eastern China it has velvety, conspicuously pink and silver-veined, purplish-beneath, dark blue-green leaves that turn red and purple in Autumn.

It is also known as Chinese virginia creeper, Henry's creeper, Silver-vein creeper, and Starry woodbine.

*Henryana* commemorates a Scottish-born Irish physician, plant collector, sinologist and dendrologist, Dr. Augustine Henry (1857-1930) who ultimately became a professor of forestry. From 1881-1900 he was employed (initially as an Assistant Medical Officer and Customs Assistant but would rise to the rank of Mandarin) in the Chinese Imperial Maritime Customs Service in Shanghai. He learnt to speak Chinese (he is also said to have studied law while in China and become a member of the English Middle Temple) and from 1882-1889 he was moved to several places in central and south-western China – and his duties now included investigating Chinese medicinal plants which led to his study of botany. From the end of 1884 he made botanical excursions in his free time from his customs office duties and would make extensive recorded plant collections, sending over 15,000 dried specimens (as well as seeds and 500 odd plant samples) back to Kew Gardens in England. These included 25 new genera and about 500 new species. On his return to Europe in 1901 he studied at the French National School of Forestry in Nancy and then co-wrote with the English traveller, botanist and entomologist, Henry John Elwes (1846-1922) *The Trees of Great Britain and Ireland*. In 1907 he took part in the establishment of a Chair of Forestry in Cambridge where he worked until his appointment in 1913 as Professor of Forestry at University College, Dublin (then the Royal College of Science) and became influential in the future of commercial forestry in Ireland. He was a member of many European learned societies. His other published works include *Notes on Economic Botany of China*. This species was one of Dr. Henry's discoveries.

The vine was discovered in China in 1885 but it did not appear in the West until about 1900 when it was introduced by the the English-born American botanist and plant hunter, Ernest Wilson (1876-1930).