

Parthenocissus quinquefolia

[Synonyms : *Ampelocissus cirrhata*, *Ampelocissus major*, *Ampelopsis hederacea*, *Ampelopsis hederacea* var. *dumetorum*, *Ampelopsis hederacea* var. *murorum*, *Ampelopsis heptaphylla*, *Ampelopsis himalayana*, *Ampelopsis hirsuta*, *Ampelopsis latifolia*, *Ampelopsis quinquefolia*, *Ampelopsis quinquefolia* var. *angustifolia*, *Ampelopsis quinquefolia* var. *dumetorum*, *Ampelopsis quinquefolia* var. *graebneri*, *Ampelopsis quinquefolia* var. *heptaphylla*, *Ampelopsis quinquefolia* var. *hirsuta*, *Ampelopsis quinquefolia* var. *laciniata*, *Ampelopsis quinquefolia* var. *latifolia*, *Ampelopsis quinquefolia* var. *murorum*, *Ampelopsis quinquefolia* var. *pubescens*, *Ampelopsis quinquefolia* var. *radicantissima*, *Ampelopsis quinquefolia* var. *spaethii*, *Ampelopsis radicantissima* var. *graebneri*, *Ampelopsis radicantissima* var. *saint-paulii*, *Ampelopsis roylei*, *Ampelopsis saint-paulii*, *Ampelopsis virginiana*, *Cissus hederacea*, *Cissus hirsuta*, *Cissus mexicana*, *Cissus quinquefolia*, *Hedera carnosae*, *Hedera quinquefolia*, *Parthenocissus dumetorum*, *Parthenocissus engelmannii*, *Parthenocissus heptaphylla*, *Parthenocissus hirsuta*, *Parthenocissus inserta*, *Parthenocissus pubescens*, *Psedera quinquefolia*, *Parthenocissus quinquefolia* forma *engelmannii*, *Parthenocissus quinquefolia* var. *hirsuta*, *Parthenocissus quinquefolia* var. *murorum*, *Parthenocissus quinquefolia* forma *quinquefolia*, *Parthenocissus quinquefolia* var. *saintpaulii*, *Psedera heptaphylla*, *Psedera quinquefolia*, *Psedera quinquefolia* var. *murorum*, *Quinaria quinquefolia*, *Vitis hederacea*, *Vitis inserta*, *Vitis quinquefolia*]

VIRGINIA CREEPER is a deciduous climbing vine. Native to eastern central North America to Mexico it has with tiny greenish-yellow flowers and leaves that turn brilliant scarlet and crimson in Autumn.

It is also known as American ivy, American virginia creeper, American woodbine, Confederate vine, Creeper, False grapes, Five finger, Five-leaved ivy, Five leaves, *Fünfblättrige Jungfernrebe* (German), *Fünflappige Jungfernrebe* (German), *Igha hazi itai* (Omaha and Ponca North American Indian), *Klättervildvin* (Swedish), *Klättervin* (Swedish), *Loubinec pětistý* (Czech), *Loubinec pýřitý* (Czech), *Prísavnik pětistý* (Czech), *Psí víno* (Czech), True virginia creeper, *Vigne-vierge* (French-Canadian), *Wilder Wein* (German), *Wilde Wingerd* (Dutch), Wild woodbine, Wild woodvine, Virginian vine, Woodbine, Wood vine, and Woody climber; and in flower language is said to be a symbol of ‘ever changing’, and ‘I cling to you’.

Warning – berries have been associated with deaths of children based upon circumstantial evidence and both the leaves and berries have caused vomiting, diarrhoea, dilated pupils, sweating, weak pulse, collapse and sleep. They are poisonous for some animals.

Quinquefolia is derived from Latin *quinque* (five) and *-folia* (leaved) components.

Like ‘yew’ the name ‘ivy’ is said to be derived from the Old English word *iw*.

A black dye can be obtained from a decoction of the leaves, and the North American Indian Kiowa tribe used the fruit for a pink paint worn on skin and feathers in War Dances.

The bark supplied a medicine for many quite a few Indian tribes, particularly as a tonic or for treating catarrh or fluid retention; and the The Meskwaki used a root decoction as a cure for diarrhoea, the Cherokee took an infusion to treat jaundice, and for the Iroquois it was

not only an ingredient in a remedy for some period problems but in a solution it was also used to treat poison elder (*Rhus vernix*) ailments.

English authorities have noted from records that virginia creeper was a familiar sight clothing walls of buildings in London and elsewhere by 1722 – and it does seem to have attracted more favourable comment than otherwise.

Medicinally, virginia creeper was recommended by herbalists for many disorders including headaches, rheumatism, fluid retention and not least plague. It is said to have been used with great success in a remedy in 1665 during the Great Plague of London when bubonic plague wreaked havoc on the populace. Children's lice were removed with a decoction of leaves and freshly bruised leaves were applied to bunions and painful corns. The English evangelist and founder of the Methodist Church, John Wesley (1703-1791) is said personally to have confirmed the truth of the latter as a cure.