

Virgin's Bower Clematis (*Clematis virginiana*)

10-20' x 3-6' fine-textured vine, climbing via twisting leaf petioles.

CT native, found in moderately moist areas at woodland edges and openings, slopes, thickets, streambanks, disturbed areas.

Cascading clusters of profuse pure-white lightly-fragrant 4-petal 1" flowers, for a month, August-September, on current year's growth.

Highly ornamental 2" plume-like, feathery seedheads replace flowers. Initially green and silky, then fluffy white, then brown in winter.

2-3" bright green sharply-toothed pointed leaflets, in sets of three, each with 2" twisting petioles.

Young stems green or red.

Partial sun to a fair amount of shade. Easily grown in average to wet, well-drained soils. Prefers rich fertile soil, but grows in dry shade.

To encourage good form, prune back in fall or early spring to 8-24" from ground, to strong leaf buds. Prune for shaping and control anytime during growing season.

Note: Virgin's Bower looks similar to Sweet Autumn Clematis, of Japanese origin, which is considered a potentially invasive plant in CT. VB grows exuberantly, but not as aggressively as SAC. VB may self-seed, but less than SAC. ID: VB has toothed leaves.

A lovely vine that climbs well on wires, fences, walls, trellises, posts, makeshift structures. Beautiful climbing on trees or over shrubs, though make sure host is not overwhelmed. Can also use to scramble along ground in woods, native plant areas.

Fragrant flowers attract butterflies, bees, and hummingbirds. Seeds provide food/shelter for migratory birds, and bird food in the winter. Gold finches use downy seed material for nests. Foliage provides cover/nesting for birds, including Finches, Indigo Buntings.

Photos 1, 2 David G. Smith, Delaware Wildflowers
delawarewildflowers.org/plant.php?id=0515

Photos 3, 4, 7, 8, 10 Will Cook, Carolina Nature
carolinanature.com/trees/clvi.html

Photo 5 SB_Johnny
commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Clematis_virginiana_002.JPG

Photo 6 Matthew L. Wagner
wisplants.uwsp.edu/scripts/detail.asp?SpCode=CLEVIR
Photo 9 Blanca Begert, Brooklyn Botanic Garden
bbg.org

