

Botanical Name: Vigna caracalla (Phaseolus gigantea)

Common Name: Snail Vine

Type of Plant: dicot; vine Character deciduous

Habit of Growth:

Overall Shape a fast-growing, climbing plant - in mild climate areas  
becomes woody and vinelike with age; plant climbs by twining (like pole beans);  
dies back to ground in colder areas

Height 10' - 20' Spread equal or more Growth Rate rapid

Environment:

Exposure outdoors full sun to partial shade; best in coastal areas

Soil prefers moist, rich soils; tolerates heavy wet soil  
locations

Hardiness tender (zones 12-24): avoid shaded or cold habitats

Morphology:

Leaves trifoliate, alternate, dark green; leaflets ovate, 1"-2"  
long, deeply furrowed on upper surface

Flowers unusual shaped, pale purple - blue, 2" across, in loose  
open clusters; twisted "keel" petal has coiled shape; Spring

Fruit if developed, an elongate pod 6" - 12"

Propagation: semi-hardwood cuttings or seed

Usage: fast-growing fence or bank cover, attractive during  
spring/early summer for its heavy display of the pale bluish-purple flowers

Landscape Care:

Watering regular preferred - tolerates heavy; dies back to ground if  
drought-stressed

Fertilizing balanced, in early spring; supplement during summer if  
plant receives heavy irrigation

Pruning head back close to ground during dormant season

Pests/Diseases relatively free; whitefly in shaded or very humid locations

Special Conditions

Origin: Southeast Asia Family: Fabaceae