

Bell County Master Gardener  
Tip of the Week  
By Mary Lew Quesinberry  
Attracting Wildlife with Flowering Vines

Plan and plant to lure butterflies and hummingbirds to your garden with these three late-summer/fall flowering vines. Coral Vine/Queen's Wreath, Hyacinth Bean Vine and Sweet Autumn Clematis are well mannered, easy to grow vines that make a beautiful display when planted together on an arbor or fence.

Coral Vine (*Antigonon leptopus*) is a fast growing vine with tiny rose pink colored flowers and heart shaped leaves. It is a native of Mexico, mostly evergreen in a mild winter and its tendrils can reach 40 feet. It is grown from cuttings, plants or seed. It will grow in full sun and light shade. Keep it watered and mulched, particularly in the winter to ensure its survival through freezing temperatures.

Sweet Autumn Clematis (*Clematis terniflora*) is an evergreen vine even in our coldest central Texas winters. A drought tolerant plant that is not particular about soil, it has a sweet fragrance and small star-shaped white flowers and dark-green shiny leaves. The masses of flowers in the fall totally cover its leaves and its tendrils can grow to 30 feet.

Hyacinth Bean Vine (*Lablab purpureus*) is a super-fast growing vine that reaches 15 feet. It has purple flowers and gorgeous shiny purple seedpods. It is easy to grow from seed if you soak the seeds overnight before planting. Hyacinth Bean Vine will freeze in the winter, but is easy to replace with the many seedpods you save. The seed of this plant look like Oreo cookies and they are welcome gifts to gardener friends. Monarch Butterflies and hummingbirds will visit these vines and enhance the beauty of the purple, white and rose-colored blooms with their graceful flight. Plant these vines in a sunny location in soil that is amended with decomposed granite or expanded shale.

These amendments will keep our clay soil from compacting and smothering the root system. Water and organic mulch will benefit the vines in both summer and winter weather extremes.

Have any questions about gardening in Central Texas? Contact [ask.bcmga@gmail.com](mailto:ask.bcmga@gmail.com)

In the photo: The rose-pink blooms of the Coral Vine, the tiny star-shaped flowers of the Sweet Autumn Clematis and the purple blooms and shiny purple seed pods of Hyacinth Bean Vine make a stunning display when planted together. These vines are fragrant and attract butterflies and hummingbirds.

