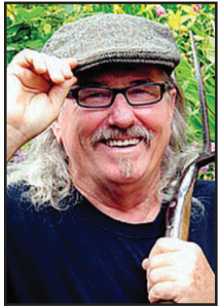


There are heroes and villains in twinning vines

Ever notice how a cat can't help raising its rear when you stroke its back? Vines do the same thing. Sorta.

I spent a few minutes the other day carefully uncoiling small vines from a bottle tree, and trying to get some to wrap around a stake. It made me recall one of the marvels from my college plant physiology classes, about what makes vines climb.



FELDER RUSHING

Not all vines twine, of course; some have to be tied, others use either little aerial rootlets to attach to supports, and some use backwards-facing thorns as hooks. But what about those that do twirl around whatever they touch? Not all do it, but those that do are pretty determined.

Without getting into calcium pathways, contractile proteins and all that, the way some plants grow towards things, the turning response to stimuli called tropisms, can be pretty amazing.

We are all familiar with how sunflowers follow the sun through phototropism, and early roots "know" to grow down through the geotropic effects of gravity. There's even one called

skototropism, in which vine seedlings on a jungle floor grow towards shadows in order to find something to climb.

But my favorite is thigmotropism, or towards touch. It's what causes some vine stems or their little support tendrils to wrap around things. Waving around in the air at first, when one of these touches a support, be it a small tree, fence-post, or trellis, the touched side starts growing more slowly while cells on the "away" side keep growing normally, which pushes the vine towards the support. And the coiling takes it from there.

By the way, just as it's a myth that water swirls down drains either clockwise or anticlockwise depending on north or south of the Equator, vines don't coil naturally one direction or the other. I have had some tendrils on vines actually reverse their direction from one week to the next.

It's just one of those little things to think about while knocking around the garden, especially if you grow different vines. Funny how most gardeners think it is a no-no



Vine wrapping towards touch.

to plant more than one vine near one another; I usually plant perennial clematis and climbing roses together, for example, and because my native maypop passion flower vine gets really boogered up by gulf fritillary butterfly larvae, I mask the bareness by growing it with spring-flowering crossvine and yellow Carolina jessamine.

One of my latest projects

is a gourd house, which is tall posts with covered with heavy gauge wire mesh like they use to reinforce concrete walks and patios. Gourd vines make great shade very quickly, and end up with dozens of gourds hanging down by mid-summer. To further the interest I interplants a few other annual vines such as black-eyed Susan vine, night-flowering moonvine, hummingbird-

WEST REPORT by West Civic Club

There are some families here in West that we should remember as they have lost family members recently because of other health issues. The most recent family is the David Starns family as Miss Sarah passed rather unexpectedly, Mr. Marshall Hart and Mr. Doug Holmes have passed recently.

It is sad when we loose any of our family members. Two other people we need to say our prayers for: Jack Barnes and his family as he has had surgery and at last notice is still in the hospital doing well; and Miss Terry Holt.

The West Civic Club voted

to postpone the West School Reunion this year due to the virus but, we have received several nice letters with donations to help us continue with the repair work on the old Masonic Lodge, school building. Thank you all. I would also like to say congratulations to all the seniors that have graduated or will in the next few days.

At this writing there will be no annual trip for the civic club, although we are going to meet and get some decisions made on upcoming events.

Hope you all stay safe and God continues to bless us with his love and care.

attracting cypress vine, and heirloom hyacinth bean with its lavender flowers and deep purple pods.

I don't overdo this because some vines are real thugs and will overgrow and shade out others, but it's an interesting effect. And because the support mesh is such heavy duty mesh I can easily neaten it all up in early winter with my string trimmer.

Anyway, as I prepare my summer garden to do its thing, I have found myself using all sorts of supports for various vines, from an arbor

to tie my climbing rose onto and purple-painted tee-pees for my beans, and knobby rebar for tomatoes.

Some I'm having to tie up, some are doing their thigmotomthing on their own. Some are so aggressive I'm having to move my chair to keep it from getting wrapped up overnight.

Felder Rushing is a Mississippi author, columnist, and host of the "Gestalt Garden-er" on MPB Think Radio. Email gardening questions to rushingfelder@yahoo.com.

MMRLS offering curbside library services at select locations beginning May 11

Press Release

The Mid-Mississippi Regional Library System will be offering curbside book, audiobook, and DVD check-out, along with curbside document services, beginning May 11 at its Attala County Library, Carthage-Leake County Library, Durant Public Library, Winona-Montgomery County Library, and Winston County Library locations. Library patrons will be able to place holds on up to five items anytime using the library's online catalog, or by calling any of the above participating branch locations. After receiving notification that their items are ready to be picked up, customers can head to their local participating branch, and call to receive curbside delivery. Document services will also be provided, includ-

ing the copying, faxing, and printing of up to five pages per visit.

Patrons will also be able to return their library items at the above branches utilizing library bookdrops, though all items with a due date of March 9 and after have automatically been extended to June 1.

"We've been eager to find a way to resume offering some in-person services to our customers while keeping everyone safe," said Mid-Mississippi Regional Library System Executive Director, Josh Haidet. "We feel confident the protocol we've set up for curbside library services does that, and I really appreciate the continued patience of our customers as this new service is rolled out. Our communities have provided us with incredible

support during this difficult time, and we've been thrilled to see significant increases in usage of our digital library collection."

The MMRLS Digital Library is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week online at www.mmrls.lib.ms.us/ere-sources. All eResources are accessible with a MMRLS library card. You can even visit the library's website to receive a digital library card if you live in the MMRLS service area and do not currently have a card.

For more information or questions about MMRLS curbside services, please visit: www.mmrls.lib.ms.us/curbside, or call 662-289-5151. The Mid-Mississippi Regional Library System serves Attala, Holmes, Leake, Montgomery, and Winston Counties.



Curbside Services

Delivered to your vehicle:

- Books & Audiobooks
- DVDs

Document Services:

- Printing
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