

Elephant Vine, *Woolly Morning Glory*

A strong-growing, twining climber, which, with support, can reach the top of four-storey building facades, *A. nervosa* is a native of the Indian subcontinent, and has been introduced into many other countries in the tropics. It can often be seen in Arriyadh entwined in fences or tumbling over house boundary walls. The plant has very large, heart-shaped leaves and its flowers are hairy, trumpet-shaped, white outside with purplish-pink petals inside, appearing in cymes. While invasive, it is prized as a particularly attractive, resilient climber with pretty flowers. Traditionally, the leaves and roots of the plants have seen many medicinal uses. The plant is very slow-growing at first, developing into a compact bush, after which it becomes a liana. Without regular irrigation, it will die back and then regenerate with watering. Propagation is from the toughly coated seed, which requires nicking or soaking in boiling water for germination. Flowering often begins soon after germination with sufficient irrigation and plenty of space for root growth. Best in partial shade, leaves may scorch in full sunlight. For best results, *A. nervosa* should be planted in rich, well-drained soil; saturation will cause the plant to wilt and the roots to rot. Under good conditions, it will develop a massive root system. A strong trellis system or steel cables should be provided. The major maintenance effort inevitably involves disentwining the vine from places into which it should not be growing.



**GENERAL**

Origin	: sub-tropical
Vigour	: fast growing
Humidity	: semi-arid, semi-humid
Propagation	: sowing and pricking out
Maintenance	: moderate

**CONDITIONS**

Urban climate	: resistant
Dessication	: vulnerable
Stagnant water	: vulnerable
Irrigation	: medium
Salinity/ppm	: moderate (1800 ppm)
Hardiness	: -3°C

**SHAPE**

Type	: climbers
Height	: 3 m-8 m
Spread	: 4 m-10 m
Foliage	: evergreen

**FLOWER**

Colour	: pink, throat: violet
Size	: 5 cm - 8 cm
Period	: July - August

**FRUIT**

Fruit size	: 1.5 cm
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