

## SMILACACEAE – GREENBRIER (CATBRIER) FAMILY

**Plant:** mostly woody vines, some herbs and shrubs

**Stem:** often with tendrils, spines common in some

**Root:** often with tubers

**Leaves:** evergreen, mostly simple, alternate (sometimes opposite) and entire; one veined or mostly 3-7 curved, parallel main veins with net veins between; tendrils often present, stipules present or not

**Flowers:** mostly dioecious, some perfect; flower parts (tepals) in 3's in 2 cycles of 6; stamens vary but often 6; ovary superior

**Fruit:** berry, 1-6 but often 3 seeds

**Other:** Carrion Flower is the only non-woody greenbrier in the area;  
Monocotyledons Group

**Genera:** 3-12 (uncertain); locally *Smilax* (greenbrier or catbrier)

## SMILACACEAE – GREENBRIER (CATBRIER) FAMILY

Saw [Fringed] Greenbrier; *Smilax bona-nox* L.

Upright Carrion-Flower; *Smilax ecirrhata* (Engelm. Ex Kunth) S. Watson

Cat Greenbrier [Sawbrier]; *Smilax glauca* Walter

Smooth Carrion-Flower; *Smilax herbacea* L.

Illinois Greenbrier; *Smilax illinoensis* Mangaly

Round Leaved [Common] Greenbrier; *Smilax rotundifolia* L.

Bristly Greenbrier [Catbrier]; *Smilax tamnoides* L.

# Saw [Fringed] Greenbrier

*Smilax bona-nox* L.

Smilacaceae (Greenbrier Family)

Tybee Island, Georgia

Notes: flower with 6 tepals, greenish; leaves alternate, simple, often hastate (arrowhead shaped) or at least with a deltoid base, leaf margins thickened and spinose, tip sharp-pointed; stem green, at least 1+ angled and spinose; fruits dark blue to black; late spring to summer

[V Max Brown, 2006]



# Upright Carrion-Flower

*Smilax ecirrhata* (Engelm. ex  
Kunth) S. Watson

Smilacaceae (Greenbrier Family)

Goll Woods State Nature Preserve, Fulton  
County, Ohio

Notes: flower with 6 tepals, greenish, in umbels  
(less than 20 flowers usually), peduncle long  
with bract at base, flowers below leaves; leaves  
cordate to ovate and truncate, usually with no  
tendrils; fruit a berry; upright plant, woods;  
spring to early summer

[V Max Brown, 2009]



# Cat Greenbrier [Sawbrier]

*Smilax glauca* Walter

Smilacaceae (Greenbrier Family)

Oak Openings Metropark, Lucas County, Ohio

Notes: vine; 6 tepal flower; leaves entire, generally ovate, shiny above and whitened below (varieties based on glabrous or hairy below); stem slender, green turning brownish, round, slender prickles irregularly present; fruit a blue to black berry; usually found in woods

[V Max Brown, 2008]



# Smooth Carrion-Flower

*Smilax herbacea* L.

Smilacaceae (Greenbrier Family)

Farnsworth Metropark, Lucas County, Ohio

Notes: vine; flower with 6 tepals, greenish to white, in umbel, peduncle very long; leaves ovate to cordate, whitened or glaucous beneath; non-woody climbing species with tendrils, no prickles or spines; fruits dark blue and smooth in dense umbel; late spring to summer

[V Max Brown, 2004]



# Illinois Greenbrier

*Smilax illinoensis* Mangaly

Smilacaceae (Greenbrier Family)

Goll Woods State Nature Preserve,

Fulton County, Ohio

Notes: flower with 6 tepals, greenish, in umbels (greater than 20 flowers usually), peduncle long with bract at base, flowers below leaves; leaves ovate and truncate, with tendrils at only upper leaf nodes; fruit a berry; upright plant, woods; spring to early summer

[V Max Brown, 2009]



# Round Leaved [Common] Greenbrier



*Smilax rotundifolia* L.  
Smilacaceae (Greenbrier Family)  
Oak Openings Metropark, Lucas County, Ohio  
Notes: vine; 6 tepal flower; leaves entire, shiny above and green below; stem green, stout, strongly round or 4-angled, many large flattened prickles especially on lower stem; fruit a blue to black berry; usually found in woods  
[V Max Brown, 2004]



# Bristly Greenbrier [Catbrier]

*Smilax tamnoides* L.

Smilacaceae (Greenbrier Family)

Maumee River Metroparks, Lucas County, Ohio

Notes: vine; lower 'woody' part densely covered with black bristles and spines; leaves alternate, ovate to cordate (variable), mostly entire but sometimes fine teeth present, tip sharp or rounded; fruit of berries, black without whitish bloom, in umbels; late spring to summer

[V Max Brown, 2004]

